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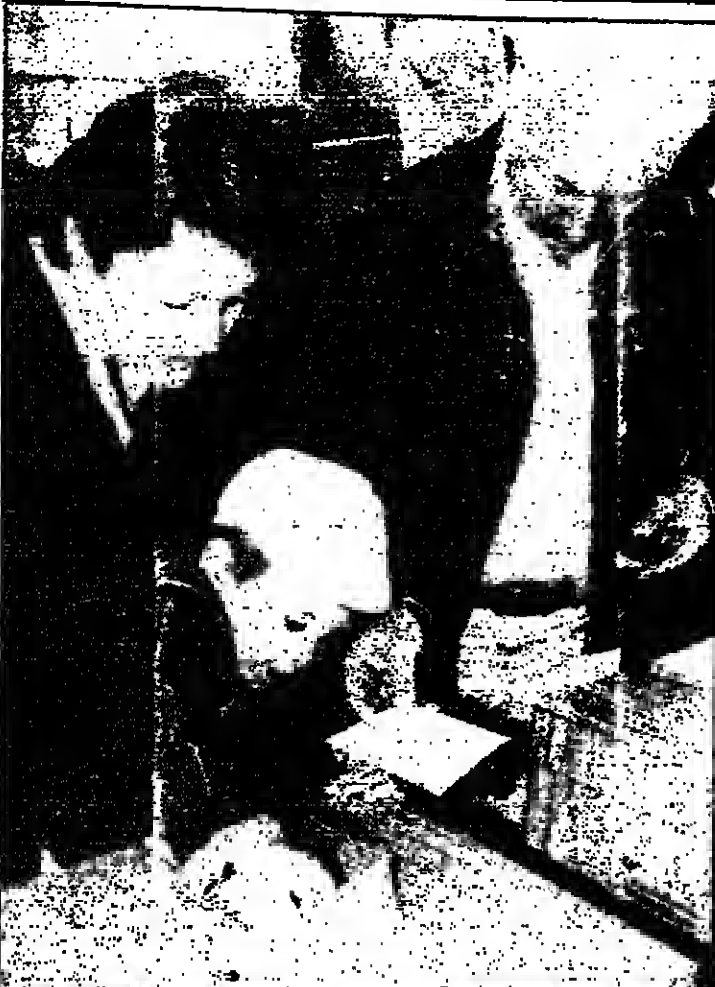
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MONDAY, MARCH 26, 1990/SAH'ABAN 29, 1410 AH

24 PAGES 150 FILS



A young Hungarian boy casts the vote of his grandmother in Hungarian election. (Reuters wirephoto)

Alliance, Forum in close race

Hungary holds free elections

BUDAPEST, March 25. (Reuters): Hungarians voted today in their first free national elections since 1945 as an opinion poll predicted defeat for the ruling ex-Communists and a two-horse race for first place. Indications were voters turnout would be higher than expected, despite a lacklustre campaign.

More than 1,600 candidates and 27 parties are competing for 386 seats in Hungary's National Assembly in the second of five parliamentary elections scheduled for Eastern Europe this year.

A last-minute survey by the Gallup organisation, pointed to a close race between two new parties — the Liberal-Social Democratic Alliance of Free Democrats and the centre-right Hungarian Democratic Forum.

The elections, which will go to a second round on April 8, will seal a peaceful transition back to Western-style politics after more than four decades of communism.

"This will be perhaps our first real opportunity to decide, vote and choose freely," interim head of state Matyas Szarus told the country's 7.8 million voters in an election message.

Conservatives won a landslide victory in East Germany exactly one week ago. Elections are also scheduled in Romania, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria over the next three months.

In Hungary, the first of 11,000 polling stations opened at 5 am and election officers reported that early voting was going smoothly.

The reborn Independent Smallholders' Party, by far the biggest force in the last fully democratic elections in November 1945, had mounted a strong challenge in recent weeks by pledges to return land collectivised by the Communist Party.

But the Gallup poll showed the Smallholders fading to about 11 per cent of support.

Weather

FAIR weather with light to moderate north-westerly wind and some scattered clouds will appear.

State of sea: Moderate

High water: 12.00 noon, 12.00 pm

Low water: 6.00 am, 6.00 pm

Sunrise: 5.45 am

Sunset: 6.05 pm

Maximum temperatures recorded:

Kuwait: 25°C 72°F

Almadi: 25°C 77°F

Minimum temperatures recorded:

Kuwait: 15°C 59°F

Almadi: 17°C 63°F

Forecast:

Kuwait: 25°C 77°F

Almadi: 25°C 77°F

Maximum humidity recorded:

Kuwait: 10 per cent

Almadi: 35 per cent

Falaka: 37 per cent

Kuwait condemns Senate decision

KUWAIT yesterday condemned as "a severe blow to peace efforts" the resolution by the US Senate recognising a unified Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

"The Kuwaiti Cabinet condemns the raising of this issue by the Senate at this juncture and considers the move a crushing blow to peace efforts and a flagrant defiance of the international will in general and that of Arab and Islamic nations in particular," said the Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Rashid Abdul Aziz Al Rashid.

He made the statement following a regular weekly session of the Cabinet, chaired by His Highness the Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah.

The US Senate passed the resolution Thursday by voice vote and it is not binding on the administration.

"Kuwait calls on the United States to abide by the relevant UN resolutions and urges the world community to step up efforts so as to block any step that may thwart the peace process and enhance the sufferings of the Palestinian people," Al Rashid said.

"At the same time, Kuwait lays emphasis on the resolutions of the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organisation of Islamic Conference and the Arab League which consider the annexation as null and void," Al Rashid added.

Meanwhile, the Palestine Liberation Organisation said yesterday it was stunned and disappointed by a US Senate vote declaring that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel and that it should remain so.

Hakam Balaoui, who has frequently represented the PLO in talks with US Ambassador to Tunisia Robert Pelletreau, said in a statement that the Senate resolution will make the current peace efforts more difficult and that it plays into Israel's efforts to derail the peace process.

From life to death sentence

A MAN accused of committing a series of moral crimes, including a murder of a youth originally sentenced to life in prison by the Court of First Instance had his sentence enhanced to death by hanging.

The state prosecutor had appealed the original sentence and the Higher Court of Appeals had been told that the accused had terrorised and sexually assaulted all members of one family. Subsequently, he broke into another flat and committed the same act with members of the family. In this instance, he not only raped a 15 year old youth, but murdered him after the act.

A special task force was specially organised, whose diligent work led to the successful arrest of the culprit and conviction.

23, heading for funeral, killed

NEW DELHI, India, March 25. (AP): A farm tractor and wagon hauling 44 people to a funeral collided with a truck in western India yesterday, killing 23 people and injuring 26 others, Press Trust of India said.

The collision happened near the village of Motipura, about 680 kilometres (425 miles) southwest of New Delhi in Gujarat State, the news agency said.

The tractor and wagon were carrying 44 people to mourn a relative's death in another village, Press Trust said. It did not say how many people were in the truck.

Tractor-pulled wagons are often used to carry large groups of people to weddings, funerals and festivals in rural India.

Imelda trial prompts mixed feelings in Philippines

MANILA, March 25. (AP): The trial of Imelda Marcos in New York has prompted some mixed feelings in the Philippines.

On the one hand, many Filipinos are glad to see Mrs Marcos being brought to account for the alleged looting of the nation's treasury during the 20-year rule of her late husband, Ferdinand Marcos.

But others, notably supporters of the late president, suggest that the trial of a former Philippines First Lady on foreign soil is an affront to national pride.

Mrs Marcos went on trial last Tuesday in a Manhattan federal court on racketeering charges. She is charged to the alleged illegal transfer of more than \$160 million from the Manila government and defrauding banking institutions of \$165 million more.

President Corason Aquino's administration claims Marcos, his family and associates embezzled up to \$10 billion before he was ousted in the "people power" revolution four years ago.

However, neither Marcos nor his widow

was ever charged in the Philippines with a criminal offense, although they have been named in more than 30 civil suits.

The Philippine constitution forbids trials in absentia, and officials feared the Marcoses would invoke their right to return from exile if criminal charges were filed.

Marcos died in Hawaii last September. Mrs Aquino refused to allow his burial in the Philippines and barred the return of his immediate family, citing national security.

Amnesty report on Kuwait baseless

KUWAIT, March 25. (Kuna): Kuwait today denied as "baseless" recent claims by Amnesty International (AI) that Kuwaiti authorities were practising human rights abuses.

An authoritative source at the committee entrusted with AI affairs at Kuwait's Ministry of Justice and Legat Affairs stressed in a statement today that the allegations

computed in a press release published recently by the London-based human rights organisation were "absolutely unfounded."

The sources said that Kuwaiti authorities have always adhered to the rule of law as a basic guarantee stipulated in Kuwait's constitution which provides for equal treatment of citizens and residents concern-

ing rights and provisions of human dignity.

He said the constitution also provides for equality between all people before the law without any discrimination due to sex, origin, language or religion.

He said Kuwait had been a target of international terrorism. "Popular cafes, oil and economic installation were bom-

bed, an attempt on the life of HH the Amir was made and planes were hijacked."

Kuwait has never bowed to the forces of terrorism and evil doing and aided by the rules of law in dealing with those who committed such crimes, he said. "The provocation has not made Kuwait to ignore respect of justice and human rights," the source added.

87 perish in NY fire

Confusion and panic as victims are trapped in nightclub

NEW YORK, March 25. (Agencies): A suspicious fire swept through a jam-packed, illegal social club for Latin immigrants in New York City early today, killing at least 87 people, fire officials said.

The fire, the worst in the continental United States in 13 years, was reported at the Happy Land Social Club in the borough of the Bronx at 3.41 am (0841 GMT). It quickly spread through the two-storey brick building before being contained 2-1/2 hours later.

One witness heard what sounded like gunshots before the fire. But Ungar would not comment on reports that there was a fight before the fire broke out or that gasoline cans were found at the scene.

The building received an eviction notice in January because of improper exists, and was in the process of being condemned.

BANGLADESH

Inside today's issue a four-page (11-14) supplement on the occasion of Independence and National Day of Bangladesh.

said building commissioner Charles Smith.

The sad part of it is that this did not have to happen," said mayor David Dinkins, who visited the scene a few hours after the fire. Many of an estimated 700 similar clubs operating in New York City may be unsafe, and are being investigated, he said.

A fire at another Bronx Social Club killed 25 people on Oct 24, 1976.

Ungar put the death toll at 87 or 88 people. A makeshift morgue was set up in the building next door, and relatives gathered at the scene.

EMS Lt. Roy David said he got to the scene just as a man believed to be the lone survivor, apparently the club's disc jockey, was staggering out.

"He walked toward me," David said. "He couldn't talk. He couldn't say anything. All we could do was treat him."

Another witness, Victory Perry, said: "There were no people coming out. The (disc jockey's) clothes were stuck on his burnt skin which was coming off."

Lynn Schulman, an EMS spokeswoman, said the lone survivor was a 25-year-old man who suffered second- and third-degree burns on his arms and legs and was taken to Jacoby Hospital in guarded condition.

She said most of the victims died from smoke inhalation, but added, "some people were trampled."

Five firefighters, including a battalion chief who broke his leg, were taken to Jacoby hospital after inhaling smoke and at least six other firefighters were treated for minor smoke inhalation at the scene, she said.

Rosemary Green, whose sister-in-law and cousin were at the club, said she and other people were coming from a neighbourhood birthday party and going to the club when she encountered the scene.

At least 30 firefighters from six companies were called to the scene, said a fire department spokesman, Lee Rodriguez.



At left, firemen remove a body from the Happy Land nightclub in the Bronx, while at right they stand outside the nightclub. (Reuters wirephoto)



Hawke hopes to retain power after deadlock

SYDNEY, March 25. (Reuters): Australia's Labour Prime Minister B. Hawke pinned his hopes on retaining power on a few thousand uncounted votes after a deadlocked general election left him holding on as caretaker until a final tally.

Both Hawke and Liberal opposition leader Andrew Peacock claimed they could win after Saturday's poll, one of the closest in Australia's history.

The outcome was left hanging on first counting of votes in six delicately balanced parliamentary constituencies.

"I believe Labour will win government," Hawke told reporters today, emerging from a few hours sleep after counting in the cliff-hanger poll stopped around midnight.

Hawke said it was possible the balance of power could be held by independent Ted Mack, an ex-mayor of north Sydney, who became the first independent to enter the House of Representatives (lower house) for 25 years.

"But I hope it will be better than that for Labour," said Hawke, whose government has held power for seven years but whose tightened monetary policy has curbed consumer spending, dampened demand for imports and resulted in commercial interest rates of around 20 per cent.

Peacock claimed the Liberals, in coalition with the National Party, could win power.

Storms lash Bangladesh: 34 die

DHAKA, March 25. (AP): Two days of storms pounding most parts of Bangladesh have left at least 34 people dead, 800 injured and thousands homeless, police and news reports said today.

Power lines snapped, mud-and-straw houses were blown away and rice crops were uprooted in storms that began Friday night and continued today, the reports said.

Seven people, including three children, were killed when their mud houses collapsed on them.

Friday in Manikganj, 40 kilometres (25 miles) north-east of Dhaka, the Bengali-language Sangbad newspaper said.

Also on Friday, 100 people were missing after their boat capsized in Manikganj, the worst hit district, police officials said. The missing were presumed dead.

Five more people were killed yesterday in house collapses in three northern towns, officials said.

NEWSWATCH

nurse appeals

MANAMA, March 25. (AP): A British nurse today appealed her two-month jail sentence on charges of willfully harming an Arab infant's virginity. Western diplomatic sources reported.

Valerie Coakes, 49, was accused last June of inserting a suppository into the vagina of an 18-month-old bedouin girl, allegedly resulting in damage to the hymen and the perceived loss of virginity.

The 40-minute appeal session dealt mainly with a defence plea on behalf of Coakes, with Qatar's chief justice Abdul-Rahman presiding.

Ethnic clashes

MOSCOW, March 25. (Reuters): Nine people, including a family of five, have been killed in the southern republic of Azerbaijan in attacks by Armenian militants, official reports from the region said today.

The reports, carried by the official Tass news agency, said the attacks took place yesterday in the Kazakh district of Azerbaijan.

Death threats

ANKARA, March 25. (AP): Two Muslim fundamentalist groups have threatened to kill personnel of the U.S. Turkish, Japanese, Dutch and Yugoslavian embassies in Tunisia, Turkey's semi-official Anadolu news agency reported today.

The agency said Turkish Ambassador Metin Karaca in Tunis told Anatolia by phone that the death threats by "Islamic Revenge Organisation" and "Nahda" were made in letters mailed to the embassies. It did not say when the letters were received.



Man injured

A man injured by a police club runs away from the gates of the cemetery where thousands of people accompanied the body of slain Colombian presidential candidate Bernardo Jaramillo. Jaramillo was assassinated by alleged drug-backed killers. (Reuters wirephoto)

Officer suspended

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, March 25. (Reuters): An Israeli army captain has been suspended on suspicion of having an affair with the daughter of a Palestinian prostitute, military sources said today.

They said the captain maintained he was trying to recruit the girl, whose reported age varied from 15 to 20, as an informer in the Christian

town of Beit Jalla near Bethlehem. "He has been removed from his post as a company commander."

337 detained

CAIRO, March 25. (Reuters): Rumours that Egyptian Christians were using Muslim girls in a "white slave trade" prompted two weeks of violence in which 337 people were arrested, Cairo said today.

INTERNATIONAL



An ankle-chained Vietnamese soldier, one of the three, claimed by Khmer Rouge guerrillas to have been captured in Cambodia during the past three months, being shown to reporters at Phum Jak Klay. (Reuters wirephoto)

Cambodia asks for world help

BANGKOK, March 25. (AP) Prime Minister Hun Sen of the pro-Hanoi government in Cambodia has appealed for international aid to victims of war in the northwestern part of the country, according to a government report.

Hun Sen launched the appeal last Friday during a meeting with representatives of international organisations, the Cambodian News Agency SPK said in a report seen today.

"At present, humanitarian aid is necessary for the Cambodian people who have fled from fighting areas and for families that have settled down in recaptured zones," Hun Sen was quoted as telling the aid agencies.

He said thousands of Cambodian families had been affected by the war in the northwest, where government troops have been battling a three-party coalition of guerrillas which includes the Khmer Rouge.

Hun Sen said that since the complete withdrawal of Vietnamese troops, the guerrillas had launched large-scale attacks on the northwestern region from bases in Thailand.

Vietnam said it withdrew all its forces last September but the guerrillas claim large numbers have returned to bolster the Phnom Penh side in the northwest.

Hun Sen promised to organise a trip for the representatives of the international organisations to the affected areas. SPK said.

Crisis in Goa as Rane in minority

By Thomas Abraham
Arab Times correspondent

NEW DELHI, March 25: The western Indian state of Goa was in the throes of a political crisis today after the two-and-a-half month old Pratap Singh Rane government was reduced to a minority when seven Congress members withdrew their support to him, yesterday.

The breakaway group was led by Dr Luis Proto Barbosa, speaker of the 40-member legislative assembly. Soon after announcing their decision to withdraw support to the Rane ministry, the group formed the Progressive Democratic Front (PDF) along with the Maharashtra Sahitya Akademi Party (MGP), with Barbosa as its leader and staked their claim to form a new coalition government.

The PDF had reportedly reached an agreement that Barbosa will be the chief minister and MGP leader Ramakant Khatala the deputy chief minister. There were some indications that a new ministry would be sworn in today but complications arose when Rane refused to resign saying he would prove his strength on the floor of the house. The assembly is scheduled to meet from Monday for its budget session.

The Rane ministry had a wafer thin majority of just 21 members in the 40-member assembly. The PDF is now claiming the support of 26, including 19 members of the MGP.

Apart from Barbosa, the other Congress members who withdrew their support to Chief Minister Rane were Manvin Godinho, Luis Cardozo, Churchill Almeida, Farrel Furtado, J.B. Goncalves and Sonuath Juvarkar. Godinho has also resigned as president of the Goa Youth Congress.

The breakaway group is understood to have developed differences with Rane after he did not accommodate them in his ministry. Barbosa, in particular, was learnt to be unhappy that he had been offered only the speakership. The decision to withdraw support was made known Saturday after night-long discussions with MGP leaders.

Demos across Nepal demand democracy

KATHMANDU, March 25. (UPI) Hundreds of students and teachers demanding multi-party democracy demonstrated today in the capital and other Nepalese cities, leading to at least one confrontation in which police fired tear-gas, authorities said.

The confrontation with police occurred at the Lalitpur engineering campus in the Kathmandu satellite town of Patan, where students shouted slogans at police and held up traffic for about an hour before the police used tear-gas to disperse the crowd, government sources said.

The students said they were protesting a raid on the campus Friday by police while

also demonstrating their continued support for a five-week-old nationwide campaign seeking the legalisation of opposition political parties.

A group of law students also demonstrated today in Kathmandu before being dispersed by police, government and opposition sources said. Government officials said two people were arrested, while opposition sources claimed five arrests.

In addition, students of the all-female Padma Kanya campus held a two-hour demonstration to protest last week's mass arrests of about 500 professionals who were meeting at Tribhuvan University near

Kathmandu to discuss the opposition movement.

Opposition sources also said about 250 teachers at the Mahendra Morang campus in Biratnagar in southeastern Nepal marched along streets wearing black armbands in support of the movement.

The campaign of strikes and demonstrations was launched Feb 18 by the Nepali Congress Party and a coalition of seven other banned leftist parties.

The opposition is seeking to end Nepal's partyless panchayat system of elective councils on the local through national level over which King Birendra, one of the world's last absolute monarchs, has

supreme authority. Doctors said today they will stage two general strikes in coming days to protest alleged human rights violations in connection with the kingdom's budding democracy movement.

Also, an official of the International Red Cross said the agency is monitoring humanitarian conditions in the country in the wake of the movement, which has led to at least one dozen deaths and hundreds of injuries.

"We are concerned from the humanitarian point and we are following the situation," said a local official of the Geneva-based aid organisation.

Kashmir rebels hang politician

Congress leader shot dead

SRINAGAR, March 25. (Agencies) Police today found the body of a former state legislator two days after he was kidnapped by Muslim separatists and an extremist group claimed it hanged the victim after he admitted to being a police informer.

Also today, three bombs planted by separatists went off in different locations of the Kashmir valley. Bombs in Srinagar and the town of Kulgam caused property damage but no injuries, while two people were hurt in an explosion aboard a state-owned bus in Baramulla, police said.

Police said a patrol recovered the body of former legislator Mir Gbulam Mustafa at about 6 am from a street in Baramulla, an extremist hotbed in central Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir.

The body was fully clothed, its face was covered by a white cloth and there were rope burns on the neck, indicating that Mustafa had been hanged, police said. They said an autopsy had been ordered to determine the exact cause of death.

Later in the day, the Hizbul Mujahideen — Kashmiri for the party of the soldiers of God — claimed responsibility for the slaying in a written statement delivered to United Press International.

"We interrogated him, for two nights and one day. He confessed to have been working for the (police) intelligence bureau," said the statement. "We seized a pistol from him and then we hanged him."

The Islamic fundamentalist separatist group also condemned Mustafa for drinking alcohol.

The victim's body was found two days after he was abducted by militants, who forced his car to a halt in Srinagar and bundled him into their vehicle, police said.

Kashmir television said yesterday that Mustafa's kidnappers had demanded the release of 10 detained colleagues. It said they had threatened to kill him within 36 hours if the demand was not met.

But a police spokesman today said the report was wrong and the kidnappers had made no demands. Mustafa was an independent

member of the Jammu and Kashmir assembly that was dissolved last month by Governor Jagmohan, who assumed control of the state on New Delhi's orders following the resignation in January of its government.

Mustafa was involved in negotiations last December with militants who kidnapped the daughter of federal Home Minister Mulvi Mohammad Sayeed. She was freed in exchange for the release of five jailed extremists.

In a related development, police said separatists last night shot and killed a Congress (I) Party leader and dumped his body outside his home in the Kashmir town of Pahalgam, about 60 miles east of Srinagar. The body of Ghulam Nabi Kullar was discovered this morning, they said.

Mustafa and Kullar were the latest victims of separatists who are engineering a popular uprising against Indian rule of the predominantly Muslim Kashmir, whose 3 million people believe their interests have long been neglected by the Hindu-dominated government in New Delhi.

Gunmen ambush two buses in Manila

MANILA, March 25. (Agencies) A suspected communist urban guerrilla and a policeman were killed and another policeman was seriously wounded in a shootout in the capital at dawn today, officials said.

Communist rebels meanwhile opened fire at two passenger buses in the central Philippines yesterday, sparking a gunbattle with soldiers on board. Three children were killed and 18 others were wounded in the exchange of fire.

Police Col. Nicandro Mendoza said two rebels of the communist New People's Army (NPA) on board a taxi ran into a police checkpoint in suburban Quezon city and were ordered to alight after they acted suspiciously.

One of the rebels, however, pulled a gun and fired, killing Sgt. Dionisio Perez and seriously wounding patrolman Loreto Soriano. The wounded policeman was able to fire back, killing one of the rebels, Mendoza said.

The second guerrilla escaped but policemen arrested him four hours later. A .38 calibre revolver was found in his possession, Mendoza said.

It was the third ambush in the capital in less than a week and came four days before the NPA marks its 21st founding anniversary March 29. Suspected rebels staged two ambushes in the capital on Thursday, killing six people including a colonel, three soldiers and a policeman.

The rebels usually celebrate their anniversary by conducting ambushes and attacks on military outposts.

Mayor Renato Reyes of Bonifacio, Oriental Mindoro, 150 miles (250 km) south of Manila, said in a radio interview today the buses were cruising along a highway in Lissap village when they were ambushed by the rebels.

The soldiers returned fire, catching the civilians in the cross-fire, Reyes said. The wounded included 12 children and a soldier, he said.

Reyes said one of the wounded was a soldier and that government forces were pursuing the gunmen.

The reason for the attack was unclear, but rebels and other armed groups have attacked buses in the past because their owners refused to pay protection money.



In a novel twist on the family sedan, a Beijing resident has discovered a comfortable way to get around town as she relaxes on a newly bought couch while her husband pedals down the road. (Reuters wirephoto)

China admits some incriminated unfairly

BEIJING, March 25. (Reuters) China's official media have admitted that at least some people were unjustly accused in the roundup of anti-government protesters that followed the Tiananmen Square killings in Beijing last June.

The Beijing Legal Daily said that authorities in the capital had investigated 29 cases of unfair accusations against alleged participants in the unrest last year.

The newspaper, in an edition seen today, said most of these stemmed from anonymous tip-off letters that were in fact acts of slander and personal revenge.

Nine of the cases were resolved, it said, though it did not say whether compensation was made or give details of the unresolved cases.

But it went on to say that such accusations "not only infringed on individual rights but also impeded the proper work of the authorities."

Thousands of people were arrested around the country in a crackdown on dissent after the army crushed demonstrations in Beijing demanding political reforms.

China has arrested its vague details of arrests, trials and executions linked to the pro-democracy campaign, officially branded as "counter-revolutionary."

ary turmoil.

Beijing's hardline communist leaders warned of potential unrest ahead of the Asian Games this September, and vowed to crush any opposition.

The Beijing Daily today quoted Li Xingming, Communist Party chief of the Chinese capital, as telling a meeting of municipal government and party officials that they must remain vigilant.

"Enemies inside and outside the country are unwilling to admit defeat and may use overt and covert methods to stir up trouble to disrupt the Asian Games," he said.

"We must keep clear heads and be on a high state of alert," he said. "We must smash the counter-revolutionary forces and all their disruptive activities."

We cannot show leniency to them."

Athletes from around the region are expected to attend the Asian Games in September, a showcase event that Beijing hopes will lure back tourists frightened away since a bloody army crackdown last June.

Troops backed by tanks smashed their way into the city on June 4, killing hundreds, if not thousands of people and crushing a mass campaign for political reform.

Premadasa thanks India

Era of peace has begun, say Tigers

COLOMBO, March 25. (AP) The Tamil militia controlling Sri Lanka's troubled north and east said today an era of peace has begun with the withdrawal of Indian troops from the region.

"As a consequence of the Indian withdrawal, we are confident that peace, normalcy and stability will become a permanent feature in northern and eastern provinces," said Anton Balasingham, chief spokesman of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

The statement was the militia's first reaction to yesterday's pullout from Sri Lanka by the last Indian peacekeeping soldiers. The withdrawal marked the end of a 30-month deadlocked jungle war against the Tigers.

Balasingham spoke in a telephone interview from the northern town of Jaffna, the centre of the seven-year-old Tamil war for an independent nation, and the group's headquarters. The town is 300 kms (190 miles) north of Colombo.

"We are very pleased and relieved that the Indian force has finally withdrawn from Tamil soil. The final withdrawal marks the end of a tragic era of Indian military intervention and occupation which brought about unprecedented damage to the lives and property of our people," Balasingham said.

At least 1,155 Indian soldiers died fighting the guerrillas since October, 1987. The Indians claim they killed 2,000 Tamil Tiger militants during this period.

The Indian soldiers began arriving in Sri Lanka on July 30, 1987, a day after India and Sri Lanka signed an accord that allowed the troops to be deployed in the northern and eastern regions.

The soldiers were supposed to disarm the several Tamil militant groups as part of the accord that aimed to give limited autonomy to the Tamil minority. While most groups surrendered, the Tamil Tigers reneged on the accord after an initial acceptance, and began attacking the Indians in October.

"The Tigers... put up a fierce and successful armed resistance against a foreign occupation army," Balasingham said. "The will of a people cannot be crushed by military power, however formidable it may be."

The pullout was completed a week before the March 31 deadline agreed by the Indian and Sri Lankan governments. The Tigers started taking up positions while the pullout progressed.

In addition to the Indian casualties, the Tamil insurgency has cost 10,000 Sri Lankan lives. Another 6,000 people died in a backlash by ultranationalist Sinhalese guerrillas who resented the July pact and the Indian presence.

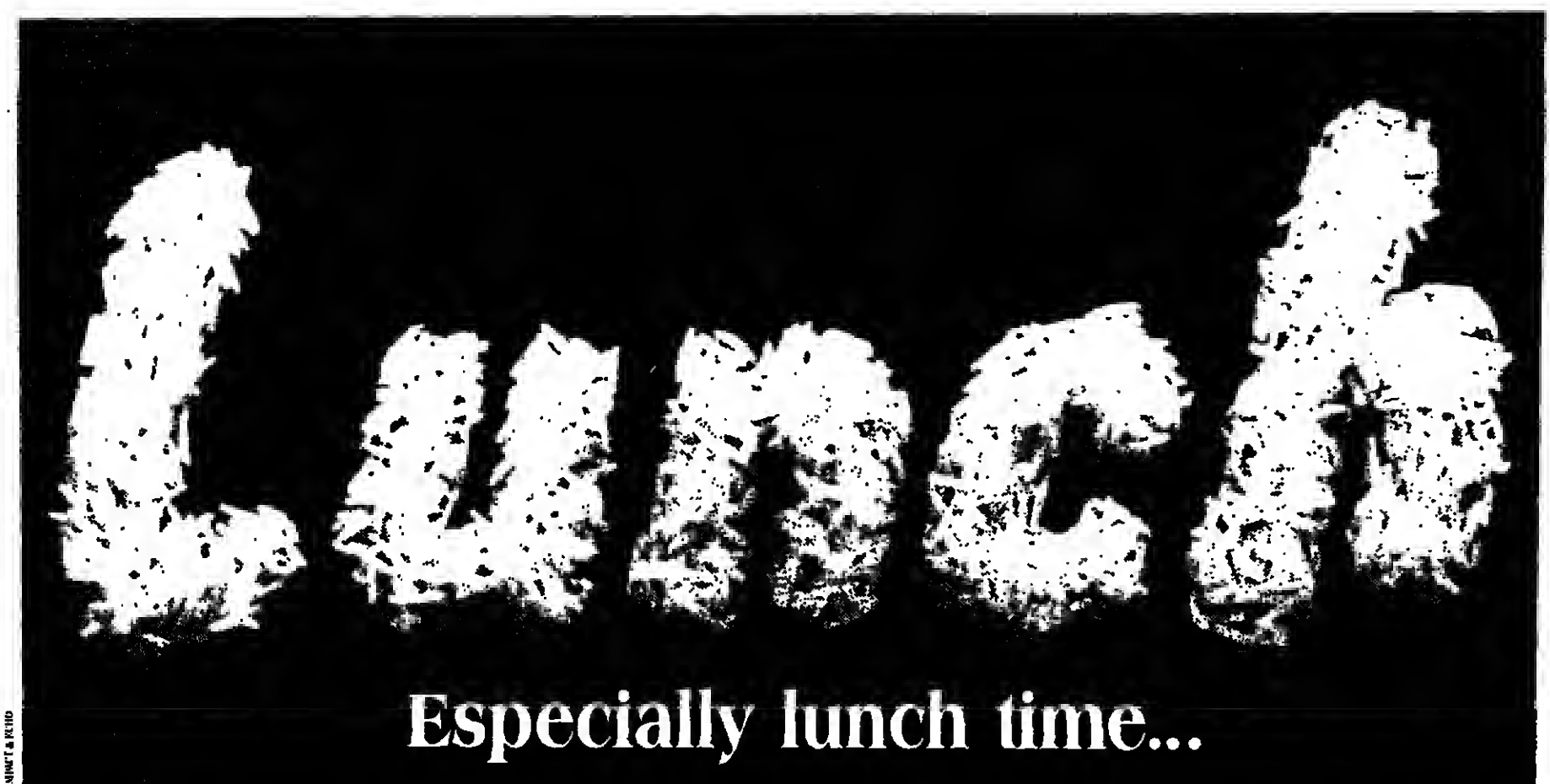
The Sri Lankan President, Ranasinghe Premadasa, thanked the leaders and government of India because the withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was one of the election promises of the present Indian government.

President Premadasa was speaking at the diamond jubilee celebrations of the Sinhala weekly newspaper "Sinhana" held in Colombo yesterday.

Ship sinks, 7 missing

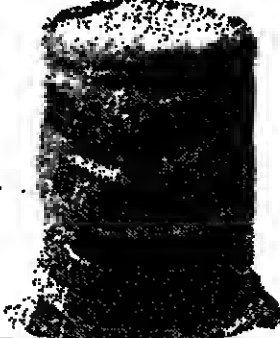
TOKYO, March 25. (AP) Twenty-seven fishermen were rescued but seven remained missing after a South Korean fishing boat sank in turbulent waters between South Korea and Japan early today.

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PEOPLE AND PLACES

MINNEAPOLIS: At least 41 pilots of passenger aircraft have lost their Minnesota state driver's licenses in the past seven years because of alcohol abuse, according to a published report.

Of those who lost licenses, 28 were employed by Northwest Airlines, the Star Tribune reported in its Sunday edition.

Officials of North West and the Federal Aviation Administration declined to comment on the findings, as did a national spokesman for the Air Line Pilots Association.

The issue gained widespread attention when three Northwest pilots were arrested this month after a flight from Fargo, North Dakota, to Minneapolis. The pilots were later fired by Northwest and have been charged with flying an airliner while under the influence of alcohol. (AP)

TACOMA, Washington: The Puyallup Indian Tribe signed away its claim to much of its traditional land Saturday in exchange for cash, promises of jobs and education and some waterfront real estate.

This is one of the most important events in our tribe's history," said tribe chairman Henry John at a packed downtown ceremony.

John said he did not expect the \$162-million land claims settlement to solve all problems that have divided the Indian and white communities over the past century. But he said it gives a framework for resolving future disagreements. (AP)

TOKYO: A South Korean fishing boat sank in rough seas off Nagasaki in southern Japan early Sunday, leaving seven of the 34 fishermen aboard missing, the Maritime Safety Agency said.

Agency officials said the 111-ton fishing boat capsized and sank in the east China Sea at about 12.30 am, some 60 miles (100 km) off the coast of Nagasaki in Nagasaki prefecture (state).

Other South Korean ships in the area rescued 27 of the fishermen, but seven were still missing. The officials said two patrol boats and one airplane went sent to the site to search for survivors. (UPI)



Charles in forest

Prince Charles stands on a suspension bridge leading to the Knap Forest of Camaroon. The prince made an unscheduled visit to the preserve before departing for home. (Reuters wirephoto)

TULSA, Oklahoma: Sweet Adelines Incorporated, founded in 1945 for women who wanted to experience the bliss of barbershop harmony, is not changing its tune — just its name.

"Some people don't think Sweet Adelines indicates what our organization is about," said Jorja Jacobs, communications director for Sweet Adelines, which will become Harmony International Corporation of Tulsa.

"Sweet Adelines to someone would probably conjure up the gay '90s," club president Marsha O'Neill said Wednesday from her office in London, Canada. "To me, you think of gentlemen with handkerchief mustaches and women in parasols. (AP)

PARIS: Screen, stage and television actress Alice Sapritch died Saturday of a heart attack, police said. She was 73.

The black-haired Armenian actress, born in Istanbul in 1916, cut a familiar figure on the left bank for decades, with a turban atop her head and cigarette held firmly between her fingers.

Ms Sapritch arrived in France in the early 1930s to study drama at the prestigious national conservatory. (AP)

VATICAN CITY: Pope John Paul II on Saturday inaugurated a Vatican exhibit on Michelangelo and the restoration of his frescoes in the Sistine Chapel.

The exhibit, entitled Michelangelo and the Sistine Chapel — technique, conservation and myth, coincides with the completion of the cleaning of the vaulted ceiling.

John Paul said the show allows visitors to "evaluate the restoration of a work of art of worldwide importance and value and especially to consider the interest it has for the history of art and world culture." (AP)

WASHINGTON: The crews of an Eastern Airlines 727 that struck a twin-engine plane on an Atlanta runway in January saw the other craft just three seconds before the collision, federal documents show.

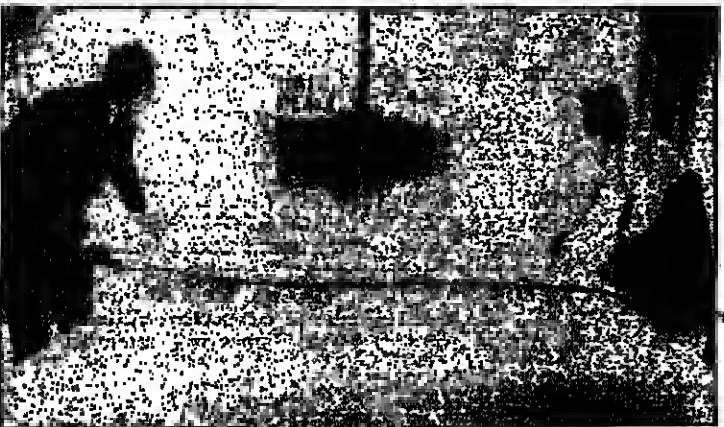
The jetliner's pilots also said the smaller aircraft had no lights on at the time of accident, which occurred at about 7 pm.

The pilot of the Beechcraft BE-A100 was killed and the co-pilot injured on Jan 18 when the plane was struck by the jetliner's right wing on a runway at Atlanta Hartsfield international airport. No one aboard the 727 was injured. (AP)

BRISBANE, Australia: Actor and comedian Richard Pryor, recovering from a minor heart attack, is in good spirits and probably will be discharged early next week, doctors said Saturday.

Pryor was admitted to Wesley Hospital four days ago after complaining of chest pain while vacationing on the famed Gold Coast strip of northeastern Australia.

"He's doing very well," said hospital medical superintendent Douglas Miller. "We're very pleased with him. (AP)



Lennon, Ono 'bed-in'

Amsterdam hotel staff put the finishing touches to the John Lennon, Yoko Ono honeymoon suite. The Amsterdam Hilton Hotel has recreated the room where John and Yoko held their famous 'bed-in' for world peace in 1969 and will charge guests 1,500 guilders (\$750) a night to sleep there. (Reuters wirephoto)

BRADENTON, Florida: Officials have not been able to determine why a man committed suicide by hurling himself into a landfill incinerator.

James Burnett and a friend had been smoking marijuana and sipping cough syrup in their truck parked

near the landfill Thursday afternoon when Burnett walked over to the incinerator and climbed in, witnesses said.

"It wasn't a matter of tripping," said Manatee county sheriff's detective Neil Foy. "He climbed a ladder and threw himself in." (AP)

Sisters Chance delivery

GREENSBORO, North Carolina, March 25, (UPI): Two sisters have each given birth to a baby boy on the same afternoon in the same hospital. Both infants weigh the same and have light blond hair.

"It was just incredible," said Karen Marie Gehrke. Gehrke, 26, and her older sister, Mary Ann Plante, 28, gave birth Thursday three hours apart, in the same hospital. Their newborn boys each weighed 7 pounds, 9 ounces (3.3 kg).

"We thought it would be neat if we gave birth on the same day. We just talked about it," Gehrke said Friday. "We just live right up the block from each other. We're real close."

Both Michael William Gehrke, born at 1:21 am, and Thomas Joseph Plante, born at 4:19 am, were doing fine.

Cohabitation no key to longer marriage

BOWLING GREEN, Ohio, March 25, (UPI): Two reports about couples who live together before marriage reach the same conclusion — couples who cohabit before marrying stand a greater chance of getting a divorce.

In their book, "What Are the Chances: Risks, Odds and Likelihood in Everyday Life," authors Bernard Siskin and Jerome Staller of the Philadelphia area refute conventional wisdom that suggests that couples who live together before they marry will stay together longer.

At the same time, a pair of Bowling Green State University sociologists, Alfred Demaris and KV Rao, report similar findings.

Their research indicates the odds for divorce among cohabiting couples are 66 per cent higher than for those who do not live together before marrying.

But Siskin and Staller, whose book on marriage covers other topics as well as cohabitation, suggest the percentage of failure stands at 33.

Their findings appear in the April edition of Readers Digest.

The Ohio researchers base their findings on analyses of more than 3,100 personal interviews conducted for the national survey of families and households.

Roughly one-fourth of the respondents lived together before marrying, Demaris and Rao said.

Control factors were used to determine whether social class, race, age at marriage (the mean was 23 years), premarital pregnancy and other influences related to divorce.

The professors say their conclusions closely parallel similar studies in Sweden in 1988 and one a year earlier in Canada. Rao participated in the latter.

Demaris said cohabitants have a tendency to be more modern, hip types who, when things aren't working, figure "I'll just check out of the relationship."

At the other end, he said, is the person with traditional values who sees marriage as a long-term commitment through thick and thin.

Coincidentally, a 1984 study Demaris conducted on marital satisfaction revealed that, as a group, premarital cohabitants were less satisfied than their non-cohabitant counterparts.

In the early years of marriage, dissolution rates for noncohabitants are nearly equal to those for their cohabiting counterparts.

The reason is that traditional couples who are flagrantly mismatched separate. But once this initial weeding out occurs, dissolution rates begin to climb sharply for the cohabitants.

In time, the spread narrows when only those committed to staying married remain among both types of couples.

Fusion gives unusual X-rays

SALT LAKE CITY, March 25, (UPI): On the first anniversary of a claimed cold fusion breakthrough at the University of Utah, physicists monitoring the research said Friday they have detected unusual levels of a apparent X-rays, a sign of a nuclear reaction.

Since the astounding claim March 23, 1989, scientists worldwide have attacked the work, saying electrochemist Stanley Pons of the University of Utah and Martin Fleischmann of England's Southampton University discovered a chemical reaction, not the claimed room-temperature nuclear fusion with the promise of cheap and relatively clean energy.

The Utah team said their simple table-top device produced more heat energy than the electrical energy it consumed, but apparently emitted lower levels of neutrons, gamma rays and tritium than a traditional nuclear process would.

Now, Utah physicist Haven E. Bergeson said his team, which is checking the chemists' results, may have detected another possible byproduct of nuclear fusion — X-rays — coming from cold fusion devices.

Appearing before a state board directing the university's National Cold Fusion Institute, Bergeson said he has detected "what appears to be copious numbers of very low-energy X-rays, which may be indicative of a copious rate of reaction but in a form that we just don't have very much of a clue yet as to what it is."

Loose ends

But Bergeson cautioned: "There's so many loose ends that could say this was all nonsense."

Nathan Lewis, a chemistry professor at California Institute of Technology and critic of cold fusion claims, said the latest report adds little credence to the Utah claims. He said when a scientist studies a very low-level effect, "you have to be very, very careful" of small factors that could throw off the results.

Even if the reported X-ray effect exists, Lewis said the Utah device still would not generate nuclear fusion byproducts at a level or rate that would match its reported heat production.

Conventional nuclear fusion research requires temperatures of millions of degrees, similar to temperatures found on the sun, to create the reaction.

In their device, Pons and Fleischmann placed electrodes of palladium and platinum in a jar of heavy water, water made of deuterium and oxygen. Deuterium is a form of hydrogen with an extra neutron.

When an electric current was run through the jar, the Utah scientists theorized the deuterium and oxygen split apart and the deuterium was absorbed by the palladium electrode in such tremendous concentrations that the atoms fused, releasing heat energy.

Celusive

Scientific sources, who asked out to be identified said if X-rays are coming from the palladium electrode they should be easy to detect, not elusive as Bergeson described.

In his appearance before the fusion board, Bergeson said, "it does have the appearance right now, and I have to say just appearance, that there is something very interesting happening. I wish I could tell you just what it is. We're working very hard to find out."

Since the announcement one year ago, scientists at numerous US universities and Britain's leading atomic laboratory, working in consultation with Fleischmann, have not been able to reproduce the Utah findings.

The US Energy Department has recommended against establishing a cold fusion research center. But the state of Utah allocated several million dollars for the effort, outing at least seven US universities and two national laboratories have duplicated parts of the cold fusion results.



Khashoggi sitting pretty

Saudi arms broker Adnan Khashoggi sits at his home underneath a magazine covers of himself from around the world in his home in New York City yesterday. Khashoggi is on trial with ex-Philippines First Lady Imelda Marcos for federal racketeering charges. (Reuters wirephoto)

Close race for best actor Tandy at 80 may be an Oscar winner

LOS ANGELES, March 25, (Reuters): Jessica Tandy is a strong Hollywood favourite to become, at 80, the oldest performer to win an Oscar on Monday night and help take home a carload of awards for Driving Miss Daisy.

Film experts believe the award for best actor will be a close call between Morgan Freeman, who played Tandy's chauffeur in "Driving Miss Daisy," and Tom Cruise, star of "Born On the Fourth of July."

Asked how it felt to be in a close race, a relaxed Freeman said with a laugh: "Not good — I might lose."

"I don't anxiously desire to win. What I anxiously desire is not to lose," said Freeman, who would be the first black actor to receive the award since Sidney Poitier won in 1964 for his role of a handyman in "Lilies Of The Field."

Whoever wins, a billion people are expected by the organisers to watch Hollywood's night of the year, the star-studded Oscar Awards ceremony.

The Irish production "My Left Foot," starring British actor Daniel Day-Lewis as Christy Brown, an Irish writer and painter who could work with only his left foot because of crippling cerebral palsy, is considered by the film experts to be a "sleeper" — the film which could provide a major surprise on the night.

Asked if he would be at the Oscar Awards, the languid Day-Lewis, nominated for best actor

for his role, said: "Now that I am here I might as well hang around."

An Oscar could bring in millions of dollars for the Irish film, now on only limited release, but would mean little more than a pat on the back for "Born On the Fourth of July," which has already been widely shown in the US.

The film "Driving Miss Daisy," the gentle story of the growing friendship between a Jewish matron, played by Tandy, and her chauffeur in the US South, has been widely-publicised in a blockbuster studio marketing campaign and led the field with nine award nominations.

In a touch of Hollywood irony, the film, based on the play by Alfred Uhry, cost only \$7.5 million dollars to make and was turned down by a string of studios for having no wide audience appeal before being backed by Warner Brothers. The film has so far taken in more than \$70 million at US box offices.

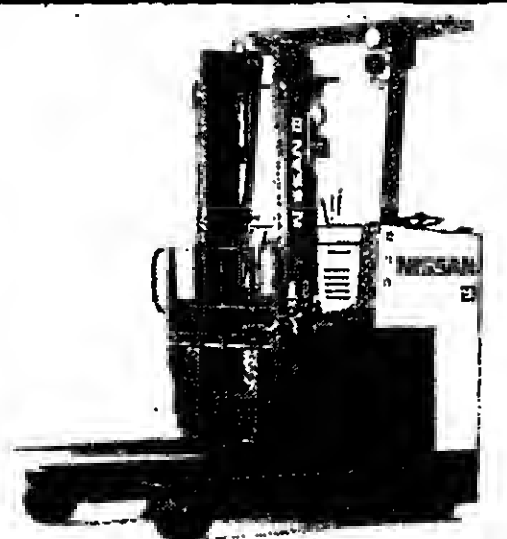
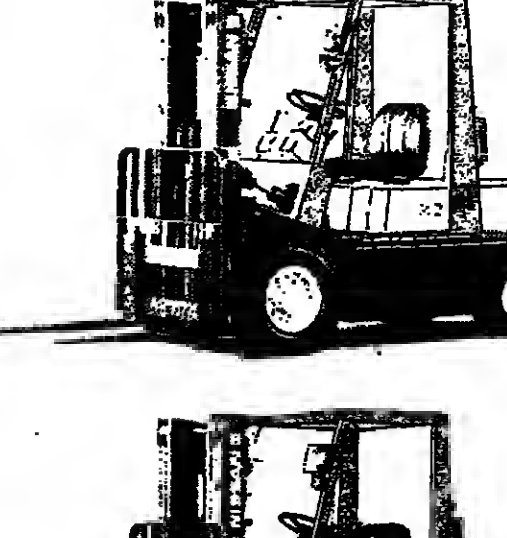
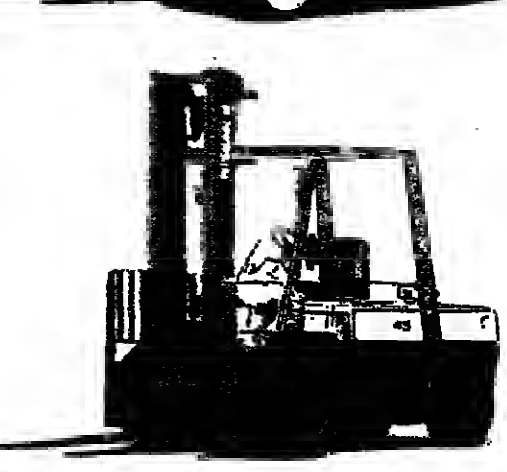
The London-born Tandy, wife of actor Hume Cronyn, who made her stage debut in 1927, and Freeman both played their roles on stage before starring in the film.

George Burns, now 94, was also 80, but was seven months younger than Tandy, when he won an Oscar for best supporting actor for his role in "The Sunshine Boys."

The best actor award would be a sweet victory for Cruise.

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Some 7,000 Salvadorans marched through the streets of the capital city to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero. (Reuters wirephoto)

Priest slaying commemorated

Salvadoran faithful march

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador, March 25, (AP): The poor and the devout flocked by the thousands to pay homage yesterday to the memory of Roman Catholic Archbishop Oscar A. Romero on the tenth anniversary of his assassination.

More than 1,000 people jammed the unfinished downtown cathedral and several thousand more listened to the mass broadcast to the plaza and streets outside.

A 20-block march commemorating Romero preceded the service, which was celebrated by 16 bishops.

Romero was slain on March 24, 1980, as he said mass at a hospital chapel. Although the Christian Democratic government of 1984-89 compiled evidence implicating extreme rightists, no charges have been filed.

In Washington, thousands marched in front of the White House yesterday to protest US policies in Central America and mark the tenth anniversary of Romero.

Police estimated 10,000 people joined the demonstration. Police spokesman Sgt. J.P. Farrell said 83 protesters were arrested and charged with demonstrating without a permit.

The group marched peacefully, waved banners and called for a halt to US military aid to El Salvador as a light, steady snow fell.

Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Agostino Casaroli sent a message, read at the mass, in which Pope John Paul II "joins the service in spirit and raises a prayer that the sacrifice of that pastor become a new call to reconciliation and forgiveness."

"The holy father exhorts all those involved to renewed effort so that love triumphs over hate, union over division, justice over inequity and truth over lies and deception," the message added.

The decade-old civil war, which began engulfing this nation when Romero was killed, continues unabated and the death toll surpassed 72,000 late last year during a month-long offensive by leftist rebels.

One held in burning death of schoolboy

Police arrested a school caretaker in the murder of an eight-year-old boy who was apparently handcuffed and gagged before being driven to a remote canyon and set on fire.

Police said the cabbaged body of Paul Bailey was found on Friday on a lonely canyon road in the San Fernando valley on the outskirts of Los Angeles.

The boy was last seen on Friday morning when his mother dropped him off at school.

Police said they arrested Greg Smith, 21, a former caretaker at the Derby elementary school who was fired several weeks ago for what was termed "inappropriate behaviour."

Detectives believe the boy was driven handcuffed and gagged to a clearing where he was doused with a flammable liquid and set on fire.

His body was found by firemen late on Friday fighting what they believed to be a routine brush fire.

Baker sees change in South Africa

WASHINGTON, March 25, (Reuters): The United States hopes to coax and cajole South Africa towards reforming white rule, while trying to bolster moderate black forces, US officials said after a visit by Secretary of State James Baker.

Baker, who returned to Washington today after a week in Africa that took him to Namibia, South Africa and Zaire, said he was deeply impressed with the calibre of leaders he met in South Africa on both sides of the racial divide.

A senior official travelling on his plane told reporters: "We thought there was a seriousness of purpose, a pragmatic approach that makes us optimistic that

maybe there can be some progress."

Baker was moved by the inner strength, intellectual force and moderation of the black nationalist leaders he met, including Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, both recently released after 27 years in prison, officials said.

He also praised the courage of South African President F.W. de Klerk, comparing him in some respects to Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

One official said it was important for the administration of President George Bush to maintain a consensus with Congress on South Africa policy.

"Clearly we will want to make sure we brief those on the (Capitol) Hill that were already consulted prior to the trip," the official said. "It's important that we maintain general agreement between the legislative and executive branches."

Any US visit by De Klerk, who has already been invited by Bush, must be delicately handled and might be delayed if it looked likely to cause a domestic storm, the official said.

Baker went to Africa with high hopes of persuading the sides in the Angolan civil war to return to the negotiating table after months of some of the most intense fighting seen in the 15-year conflict.

He held an unprecedented meeting with Angola's Marxist President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, who a senior official said displayed new flexibility on the possibility of a ceasefire.

But when lower rank officials pursued the issue, they found less willingness to agree to a ceasefire than they had hoped.

"The Angolan government is essentially offering a Biafra solution where the other side is reabsorbed into the nation without being mistreated," said one official, referring to the Nigerian civil war of the 1960s which ended with the total defeat of the secessionist Biafran forces.

Sandinist killings cloud peace hope

Military convoy ambushed

LA PAVONA, Nicaragua, March 25, (Reuters): An ambush which killed 12 soldiers in this remote area of northern Nicaragua has clouded peace hopes raised by a Contra rebel pledge to disband.

The Defence Ministry said about 100 Contras ambushed a military convoy late on Friday as leaders of the US-backed Contras in Honduras were signing an agreement to begin laying down their arms.

The ministry said 12 Sandinista soldiers were killed in the ambush at La Pavona, some 200 kms (125 miles) north of the capital Managua. Another eight soldiers and two civilians were wounded, it said.

Residents said five rebels and a civilian who had hitched a ride with the soldiers were also killed. A burned-out military truck and a bullet-riddled jeep stood at the scene of the attack yesterday, a sloping road through thickly wooded hills.

Nearby, the bullet-boled bodies of five rebels lay ready to be buried in a single grave. Sounds of heavy fighting could be heard from three kms (1.5 miles) away where Sandinista soldiers were battling the rebels yesterday. A Sandinista officer who refused to give his

name said he believed the rebels were carrying several more dead with them.

Contra leaders in Honduras denied, however, that rebels were behind the ambush. "Our forces in Nicaragua do not have that type of mission," said Oscar Sosa Barro, known as Commander Ruben.

The heavy toll in the ambush undermined hopes of rapid end to the eight-year-old Contra war which has killed 30,000 people and caused billions of dollars in damage.

"While they were signing in Toncontin (Honduras), the blood was flowing in Nicaragua," President Daniel Ortega said in a speech to supporters yesterday.

"We have to fight so that this accord is respected and the blood stops flowing," Ortega said.

Medical sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said in a telephone interview that the attack occurred about the time the accord was being announced in Tegucigalpa.

President Daniel Ortega has repeatedly said the Contras must disband before Mrs Chamorro's inauguration if there is to be a peaceful transfer of power.

After learning of the accord, Ortega told a rally of youth supporters in Managua late Friday that "the weapons are now in the

hands of the people."

Ortega, quoted yesterday by the Sandinista newspaper Barricada, did not elaborate. But his remark seemed to be a reference to recent reports that the Sandinista Army had distributed hundreds of weapons among supporters in the provinces. There have also been reports that the Sandinista Army will not yield control to the new government.

The party newspaper voiced concern in an editorial, saying: "There is still worry over the plans that the Contras have been preparing to launch a great offensive." It said "infiltrations from Honduras continue, and that weapons are being hidden."

The editorial also pointed out that Contra military chief Israel Galesano Cornejo, known as Commander Franklin, had not signed the pact for disbanding the rebels.

The Contras signed the accord after talks with Catholic Cardinal Miguel Obando Y Bravo and envoys of President-elect Violeta Chamorro, who defeated the Sandinistas in February's elections.

Ortega said he fully supported the accord, which called for rebels being in Honduras to be disbanding by April 20 and those inside Nicaragua at a later date.

ANC exiled leaders due in Pretoria to prepare for talks

JOHANNESBURG, March 25, (Reuters): The largest group of African National Congress (ANC) guerrilla leaders to return legally from exile is due to arrive today to prepare for talks with South Africa's white government.

ANC sources in Lusaka say the group of about six officials will include guerrilla chief of staff Chris Hani, a controversial figure whose presence would be certain to anger right-wing whites.

"We must teach our cadres that there is a need to fight and talk — and if talks fail we must go back and fight," the 47-year-old

guerrilla fighter said recently.

The group's this afternoon return marks a milestone on the path to reform in South Africa. It was made possible by the lifting last month of a 30-year ban on the Zambia-based ANC, the main organisation fighting white domination.

The group, including political commissar Steve Tshwete, will prepare for the first formal meeting between the ANC and President F.W. de Klerk's six month-old reformist government on April 11.

ANC acting president Alfred Nzo and international relations chief Thabo Mbeki

are due to fly in on April 9 for the talks, aimed at clearing obstacles in the way of formal negotiations on giving political rights to the voteless black majority.

The ANC says it will negotiate only after Pretoria lifts emergency rule, frees political prisoners, removes troops from black townships and makes more progress on ending apartheid.

De Klerk wants a strong commitment from the ANC to end the armed struggle of its military wing Umkhonto We Sizwe (MK — spear of the nation).

MK chief of staff Hani, for years con-

demned as a terrorist by Pretoria, is regarded as a key figure in attempts to end township violence that has alarmed many whites who are increasingly uneasy about De Klerk's reforms.

Worshipped by radical youths who favour armed conflict over negotiations, he is well placed to persuade them talking to Pretoria is worth trying — a notion he has voiced often recently.

Two Zimbabwe opposition politicians were injured in a weekend of pre-election unrest that included a shooting, media reports said today.

Car bomb kills two, injures 35 in Peru

LIMA, March 25, (Reuters): Suspected leftist guerrillas exploded a car bomb in front of Peru's Economic Ministry in Lima on Friday night, killing two people, and police said yesterday they had rounded up 500 people.

Earlier on Friday, suspected rebels shot dead a candidate for next month's congressional elections and a state of emergency was declared in the capital.

Police said a five-year-old boy was killed when the car exploded. "We believe the car belonged to a ruling party congressman and that the man who was killed was his driver," a police spokesman told Reuters.

Thirty-five people were wounded, eight of them seriously. Neither of Peru's two major leftist guerrilla groups immediately claimed responsibility for the attack, although car bombs have been a tactic of the pro-Cuban Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement.

Shortly before the blast, police took down 18 red flags with the hammer and sickle, symbols of the Maoist Shining Path guerrilla group, in four working-class districts in Lima, the police spokesman said.

Police set up roadblocks throughout Lima after the murder of the candidate for the centre-right Democratic Front coalition by suspected Shining Path guerrillas.

More than 500 people were arrested by police in anti-guerrilla operations and large numbers of officers armed with sub-machineguns patrolled the city centre.

Four gunmen riddled Jose Galvez Fernandez with bullets as he left his home in the city's working-class Comas district. He died as a neighbour rushed him to hospital.

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Shevardnadze in Dar Es Salaam

Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze (right) is met at Dar Es Salaam airport by Soviet Charge d'Affaires for Tanzania, Alexander Gogitidze. (Reuters wirephoto)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Haitians have calm night: Haitians had their first night of calm after a week of indiscriminate killings by marauding gunmen, after a late-night appeal by interim President Ertha Pascal-Trouillot for civilians to heed the armistice and get off the streets.

In a brief television appearance, Pascal-Trouillot, Haiti's first woman president, urged neighbourhood self-defence groups to leave the streets and let the military handle the maintenance of security.

Since Sunday at least 40 people have been killed in nightly shootings widely blamed on gangsters and leftist gunmen angered by this month's shift of power from the military to civilians.

Some of the most recent casualties were caused by army attacks on the civilian militia.

No shooting was heard overnight, and no dead or wounded were reported at the state hospital.

Soldiers patrolled the streets and self-defence youths remained indoors.

"The army has the mission of ensuring security," the president said on state television, echoing an army communique released earlier Friday.

She urged Haitians to consider "the risk of things getting out of hand" in the exercise of their "legitimate" right to self-defence. (AP)

Presidential candidate mourned: Thousands of mourners marched through Bogota on Saturday to protest the assassination of leftist presidential candidate Bernardo Jaramillo, who the government said was the victim of the country's most powerful cocaine cartel.

The tense atmosphere forced the government to mobilise thousands of troops and the ruling Liberal Party to delay its presidential nomination convention until today.

Opposition parties, ranging from the conservatives to the ex-guerrilla M-19 movement, have asked the government to postpone the May 27 presidential elections because of the high level of violence.

"Elections which are carried out under these conditions, in which the opposition is physically disappearing, are not legitimate," said Diego Montan, Cudelar of Jaramillo's party, the Patriotic Union (UP). (Reuters)

Arab refugees swelling: About 500 refugees from African and Arab countries deported from Sweden were held up in the Baltic port of Swinoujscie while Polish authorities try to find a destination for them, the Pao agency said yesterday.

The group includes 190 people deported from Sweden last Thursday and Friday and 36 more yesterday who were refused entry into Sweden after travelling there by ferry from Poland, the agency said.

Some of the refugees are being housed in factory vacation centres in Swinoujscie and municipal authorities are having difficulty organising medical and social assistance, Pao said.

Two people bearing Lebanese passports travelled to Warsaw on with an appeal to parliament and the Polish Red Cross for help. They told reporters they had been denied entry into Sweden. (AP)

Gabon clamps curfew: President Omar Bongo clamped a curfew on Gabon's main oil town of Port Gentil today after looting and protests against economic austerity measures.

Gatherings of more than five people were also banned in the town, where scores of rioters looted mainly Lebanese-owned shops on Friday and today. Residents were urged to stay at home and a 10-hour curfew would begin at 1900 GMT, officials said.

Strikes and student demands for more pay and political reforms have erupted since December.

Polar expedition: Thousands greet team

ST. PAUL, Minnesota, March 25, (AP): A band played and children sang and read poems yesterday as 7,000 people welcomed members of the international trans-Antarctica expedition and their dogs back to Minnesota.

"This is the greatest moment in my life right here," expedition co-leader Will Steger told the crowd in front of the State Capitol. "We certainly felt your prayers. It got us through some almost seemingly impossible situations."

Steger, of Ely, Minnesota and his five fellow adventurers, each representing different nations, made the longest unmechanized passage across the frozen continent. Their 3,100-mile (4988-kilometre), 219-day ski and dog sled journey ended March 3.

A chilly wind blew during the ceremony.

"I had a feeling that Minnesota was colder than Antarctica," joked Soviet researcher and team member Victor Boyarsky.

Steger and expedition co-leader Jean-Louis Etienne of France have expressed concern that Antarctica's pristine environment could be destroyed by nations competing to exploit its potential mineral wealth.

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INTERNATIONAL



Skeletal remains are visible at a mass grave near the town of Neubrandenburg, East Germany close to the World War Two Stalinist internment camp of Fuenfeichen. An East German historian uncovered the grave where thousands of victims of Stalin security police are said to be buried, the Berliner Zeitung reported. (Reuters wirephoto)

Deposed and disgraced

Honecker chased

GUEHLEN, East Germany, March 25. (Reuters): Not long ago there would have been cheers. East German flags flapping in the spring breeze and flowers pressed into Erich Honecker's hands.

Yesterday people in this tiny village dropped all such pretences after 40 years of servility toward Stalinist rulers.

Banging saucepans, thumping the roof of his car and yelling "You pig, You pig", they chased the former Communist Party chief out of town and sent him scurrying back to the protection of the Protestant Church he had left barely 24 hours before.

"No rubbish here, Honecker must go," the angry crowd chanted. It was a further humiliation for the Honeckers, already reduced

to living in two cramped garret rooms after decades of unquestioned luxury, lavish bunting lodges and fancy cars.

Honecker, toppled in last year's peaceful revolution, and his wife Margot arrived secretly on Friday evening at the smart lakeside government guest house, nestled in thick pine forests at the end of a narrow track an hour's drive north of Berlin.

The aim was to improve the chances of the 77-year-old former head of state recovering enough from cancer surgery in January to stand trial for treason and corruption during his 18 years as undisputed leader of the hardline state.

Rumoured to be afoot for days but still carried out in secrecy, the

move was also intended to ease the strain on Protestant pastor Uwe Holmer and his family, who had sheltered the Honeckers for two months at the village of Lobetal.

But instead, years of suppressed hatred spilled over at Guehlen and the Holmers had to make up the beds again.

"They'll be staying here for the time being," Holmer's secretary said today.

A new home was being sought but nothing was in sight yet.

Just two hours after the couple arrived in Guehlen from Lobetal under a deal struck between outgoing Prime Minister Hans Modrow and the church, two dozen villagers gathered outside the automatic metal gates of the guest house.



Genscher decorates Horn

West Germany awarded Hungarian Foreign Minister Gyula Horn one of its highest honours on Saturday to thank Hungary for allowing East Germans to flee West last year.

West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher presented Horn with the Federal Cross of Merit during a two-hour visit to Budapest on the eve of Hungary's first free elections for 45 years.

Tens of thousands of East Germans streamed West through Hungary last September after the Budapest government broke an accord with East Berlin that had stopped them crossing the Hungarian border with Austria.

Yugoslavia steps up security in Kosovo

PRISTINA, March 25. (Reuters): Yugoslav troops and heavily-armed police kept a tense peace in Kosovo province today after the federal government accused ethnic Albanians of stirring up unrest over a mass poisoning scare.

Police carrying automatic rifles and armoured cars with machine gun turrets patrolled towns where roaming gangs of ethnic Albanians beat up about 100 Serbs and Montenegrins on Thursday and Friday, shouting "you poisoned our children."

The fighting erupted after hundreds of ethnic Albanian children were rushed to hospital complaining of stomach pains, nausea and breathing problems. Their relatives said they were victims of chemical poisoning.

No new clashes or outbreaks of the mysterious illness were reported today.

Representatives of international human rights groups

and Western doctors arrived in Pristina, Kosovo's capital, at the weekend to try to solve the riddle of the illness.

The Yugoslav government said yesterday there was no evidence that the ethnic Albanians had been poisoned and accused them of fanning violence in the province, where 28 people have been killed in clashes this year.

The federal communist authorities sent tanks and armoured cars rumbling onto the streets in a show of strength and the republic of Serbia, of which Kosovo is a part, took over direct control of security in the southern province.

The false massive poisoning of Albanians in Kosovo in the past two days was an action by Albanian separatists aimed at destabilising what is already an aggravated situation, Tanjug news agency said, quoting a government statement.

Archbishop Runcie to step down next year

LONDON, March 25. (Reuters): Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie, a controversial church leader who drew fire for his comments on religion and British government policies, will retire next year, his office said today.

The announcement from the Archbishop's Lambeth Palace residence came on the 10th anniversary of his enthronement as leader of the world's 70 million Anglicans.

The statement said Runcie's resignation, which had been tendered to Queen Elizabeth, would take effect from January 31, 1991. The archbishop had been due to retire on his 70th birthday in October next year.

Runcie said in the statement that he thought the beginning of 1991 was the right time for him to hand over to the next Archbishop of Canterbury.

"The first half of next year will be a time of fresh initiatives for the Church of England and for the churches of the British Isles," the statement said.

"The public announcement today will give sufficient time for the name of my successor to be known well before the end of this year."

Runcie, an ardent proponent of Christian unity and a fierce critic of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government, had to endure strong criticism during 10 years as Archbishop of Canterbury despite preaching a message of conciliation.

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Romanians protesting crime against the Hungarian minority wave a Romanian flag during a rally in Targu Mures. (Reuters wirephoto)

Hungary protests attack on airline

BUCHAREST, March 25. (Reuters): Hungary protested to Romania today over an arson attack on the Bucharest office of the Hungarian state airline, and demanded that it guarantee the safety of its embassy and staff in the city.

The protest capped a weekend of diplomatic sparring between the two neighbours over clashes between Romanians and ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania.

One room of the Malev Airline office was ransacked and another gutted by fire in yesterday night attack.

"It was a deliberate attack," said Captain Sergiu Zimbatu of the Bucharest fire service. Papers were scattered across the floor of the main office and the airline's telex room burnt out.

A Hungarian diplomat said the embassy in Bucharest had issued a note of protest to the Romanian Foreign Ministry requesting an immediate inquiry.

The note also asked Romania to "ensure the protection of embassy, offices and representations, as well as the personal security of staff," said the diplomat.

"We said that in the case of further unpleasant events, the responsibility would be on the Romanian side," he added.

Three people died and over 200 were wounded last Tuesday in street battles between ethnic Hungarians and Romanian nationalists in the northern Romanian town of Tighina Mures.

Hungary's ambassador, Pal Szuts, met Prime Minister Petre Roman yesterday and was said to have disputed an official Romanian statement accusing Budapest of inciting the violence.

A later Romanian statement said Roman had urged Hungary "not to complicate the situation through declarations that give Romanians in Transylvania the feeling that they are endangered."

Interim President Ion Iliescu also appealed for calm, rejecting complaints that his government had not acted firmly enough to prevent violence and stressing the need to adopt democratic methods to solve ethnic conflicts rather than the force applied in the past simply to silence them.

Officials of Romania's interim government met at city hall with representatives of the two communities in an effort to defuse the crisis.

"We agreed we had made some mistakes and the Hungarians acknowledged they had done the same," said Radu Ciontea, the head of the Vatra Romanesca, a newly-formed organisation of Romanians in Transylvania.

During yesterday's meeting between Vatra and representatives of the Hungarian Democratic Union, the political party of Transylvania's ethnic Hungarian minority, the two sides were expected to agree concrete steps to prevent a repeat of the unrest, Ciontea said.

Late Thursday, the two sides approved a new county and municipal leadership composed of 13 Romanians and eight ethnic Hungarians, with Romanian negotiators electing Hungarian council members and Hungarian negotiators voting for the Romanian representatives in order to prevent extremists from either side from being included, reports said.

There are almost two million ethnic Hungarians and eight million Romanians in the north-western province, a part of the Austro-Hungarian empire until 1918.

'I am in no trouble': Maggie

LONDON, March 25. (Reuters): British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher says she has no intention of stepping down despite a crushing by-election defeat for her ruling Conservative Party and a record plunge in its popularity.

Her comments in an interview with the Sunday Telegraph newspaper coincided with opinion polls showing the opposition Labour Party leading the Conservatives by a record margin.

"Am I in trouble? No," she told the newspaper. "Look at all the other times when we have recovered from situations like this."

The newspaper said Thatcher nodded

emphatically when asked if she intended to continue as prime minister. "There is so much more to do. I want to get on with it," she said.

Publication of the interview coincided with release of an opinion poll showing the ruling Conservatives, reeling from widespread discontent over economic policy, trailing the opposition Labour Party by a record 28 points.

The Harris Survey conducted for the Observer newspaper put support for Thatcher's party at 29 per cent compared with 57 per cent for Labour.

A Mori poll in the Sunday Times gave Labour a 23-point lead over the Con-

servatives. It showed only 13 per cent of the 1,000 people questioned wanted Thatcher to head her party in the next general election which must be held by mid-1992.

The surveys gave Labour its biggest lead over the Conservatives in 40 years of opinion polls in Britain.

Labour's previous best showing was a 21.5-point advantage in July, 1971.

Voter backlash at Thatcher's use of high interest rates to fight inflation and a new "poll tax" on adults to replace property taxes helped Labour to grab a staunchly Conservative seat in a parliament by-election on Tuesday in central England.

Estonia follows suit

Standoff between Kremlin, Lithuania continues

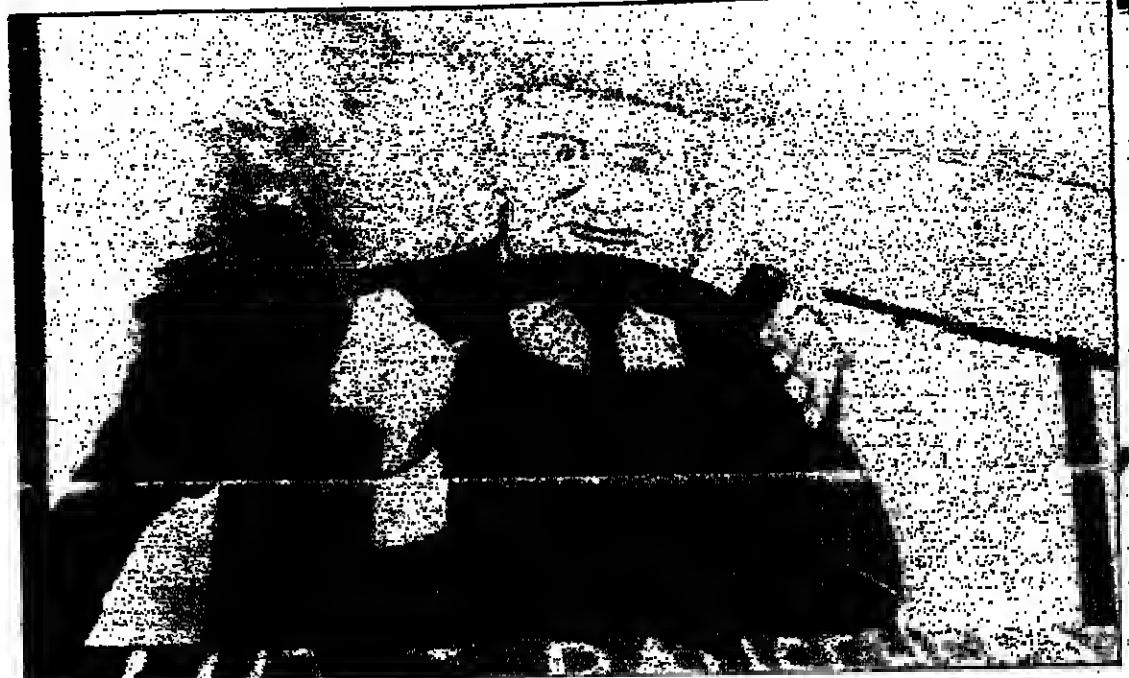
MOSCOW, March 25. (Agencies): Communists in Soviet Estonia voted today to break ties with the Soviet Communist Party in Moscow and form their own party, a spokesman said.

The decision made Estonia the second Soviet republic after Lithuania in which communists voted to form an independent party.

In Lithuania, the party move was followed by a parliamentary declaration of independence from the Soviet state.

The tense standoff between Lithuania and the Kremlin continued today as a pair of deadlines passed without apparent action by the Soviet authorities.

President Mikhail Gorbachev had decreed that Saturday was the final day for Lithuanian deserters from the Red Army to return to their units and for the cessation of signing up for volunteer groups.



A man walks by a huge cartoon of Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev at the Wall in East Berlin. Gorbachev holds a hammer in his hands. (Reuters wirephoto)

Gorbachev names presidential council

MOSCOW, March 25. (AP): President Mikhail S. Gorbachev yesterday named his key Communist Party advisers to a presidential council in a move to transfer political power from the party that has surrendered its 70-year monopoly to the new, stronger presidential government.

Then the presidency: Tass, the Soviet news agency, said Gorbachev picked two well-known writers, an economist and two parliamentarians — the head of a successful agro-industrial firm in Latvia and a worker from a steel mill in the Urals — to serve on the council.

The President's key advisers, Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze and Alexander N. Yakovlev, as well as the chiefs of the military and secret police, are among five full or non-voting members of the party's ruling Politburo selected for the new presidential advisory group.

By presidential decree, the body will be housed in the Kremlin, where Gorbachev also will have his presidential office.

The presidential council is a mechanism established under legislation passed this month that streng-

thens the presidency: Tass, the Soviet news agency, said Gorbachev picked two well-known writers, an economist and two parliamentarians — the head of a successful agro-industrial firm in Latvia and a worker from a steel mill in the Urals — to serve on the council.

The constitutional amendments establishing a strong presidency provide for the President's appointment of a presidential council to be "responsible for implementing the major lines of domestic and foreign policy and ensuring the security of the country."

The Prime Minister, Nikolai I. Ryzhkov, is the only ex-officio member, and there is no fixed number of appointees, nor any requirement that the council meet as a group.

paratroops into the city during the night. The empty trucks had left en masse during the afternoon.

"We feel we are in an occupied country," Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis told the republic's Parliament several hours after the vehicles passed by the Parliament building on their way through the capital.

In Moscow, Gorbachev surrounded himself with conservatives in announcing the make-up of a new presidential council, a key policy-making body within his new executive powers.

Pope John Paul II today prayed for an easing of the tense situation in Lithuania, calling for a "just and peaceful solution" to the country's problems during his weekly greeting to pilgrims from his Vatican window.



A Lithuanian conscript, arrested for deserting from Soviet army, in Vilnius. (Reuters wirephoto)

Fall of communism foretold

PITTSBURGH, March 25. (AP): An apparition of the Virgin Mary in Yugoslavia that has drawn millions of believers foretold the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, say participants at conference on visions of the mother of Jesus.

"It just seems too coincidental to have her appear and then all of a sudden the communist regime starts falling apart," said Robert Lacher, 54.

The two-day Eastern regional conference on visions of the Virgin Mary started yesterday at Duquesne University. The conference is focusing on the increased number of reported messages and what believers see as their tie to communism's collapse, sponsors said.

The recent spate of visions of Mary and apparitions started in 1981 in the Yugoslavian city of Medjugorje when a group of six youngsters heard her message, said John O'Keefe of the Our Lady of Peace Ministries in Pittsburgh.

Another apparition, reported was by a 12-year-old girl and her mother in Hrushev, Ukraine, on April 26, 1987, one year to the hour after the Chernobyl nuclear accident in the Ukraine, a Soviet republic.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Eastern Europe accepted: The 23-nation Council of Europe agreed Saturday to accept Eastern Europe's fledgling democracies, but insisted it would not lower stringent standards on human rights protection.

Leader denies spying: East German Social Democratic (SPD) leader Ibrahim Boettche has denied allegations he spied for the former Stasi security police and urged the SPD to stop talks with other parties until the matter is resolved.

Leader scales down visit: France's National Front on Sunday scaled down a visit to the southern city of Lyon by West German far-right leader Franz Schoenhuber after protests from the mayor and local Jewish community.

Delegates at a special two-day meeting of top officials from the Strasbourg-based organisation of Western democracies reached broad agreement that the Soviet Union and its former East European satellites were genuinely interested in building democracies, albeit on shaky foundations.

The weekly West German news magazine Der Spiegel, available ahead of publication, quoted an unidentified Stasi officer as saying he was Boettche's controller and had contact with the politician for a decade.

A political rally scheduled the same evening has been banned by Lyon Mayor Michel Noir and Schoenhuber has called off a visit to a local trade fair because organisers said they were worried about possible security problems. (Reuters)

In a letter released to the official ADN news agency yesterday, Boettche said: "Despite these assertions and suspicions I declare that I never worked for or co-operated with the Ministry for State Security (Stasi)." (Reuters)

World record price: Amedeo Modigliani's "The Pretty Shopkeeper" was sold for 63 million francs (\$10.9 million) at auction today, breaking the world record for a work by the Italian artist.

The previous record was set at a London sale at Sotheby's last November, when Modigliani's "The Girl in the Black Apron" went for 49.2 million francs (\$8 million).

British summer time: British summer time began here at 1 a.m. when clocks were put forward one hour.

This also means that the clocks were put one hour ahead of Greenwich mean time.

The change brings two hours difference only between London and Kuwait instead of three until yesterday.

Meanwhile, clocks were moved forward an hour to summer time early Sunday morning throughout the rest of Europe.

Britain ends summer time at the end of October, a month later than its EEC partners. (KUNA)

People in San Jose, the capital, rushed out of homes as buildings structures started rocking violently. Plaster, cornices and other adornments were seen crashing from older buildings into streets, along with smashing window panes and shop windows. (AP)

Mongolian demo demands dissolution of Parliament

ULAN BATOR, March 25. (Reuters): Thousands of Mongolians poured into central Ulan Bator today, demanding the dissolution of Parliament, calling the government "cheats" and cheering a proposal to build a shrine to Genghis Khan.

Leaders of 11 loosely aligned pro-democracy groups made anti-government speeches into microphones before a sea of banner-waving protesters in Sukhator Square.

The crowd, estimated by witnesses to num-

ber about 13,000, was the second biggest of several pro-democracy demonstrations since Mongolia's Popular Movement for Change erupted in December.

The opposition wants all 370 members of the Great People's Hural, or Parliament, to step aside to make way for an extraordinary session of a legislature representing all parties.

One of the banners fluttering over the square read: "93.5 per cent of the deputies to parliament are Communist Party members."

How can they represent us?" Demonstrators said a meeting of parliament last Friday failed to honour commitments that freely contested multi-party elections would be permitted.

"The government has deceived and cheated us," said Baibayar.

Newly appointed Communist Party chief Gambojavyn Ochirbat had promised that opposition parties would be allowed to take part in open elections on equal footing with the ruling Communist Party.

Christians exchange heavy fire in Beirut

BEIRUT, March 25, (Agencies): Rival Christian forces fought fierce artillery, tank and rocket battles for two hours today in mountains northeast of Beirut killing at least two people, witnesses and security sources said.

They said troops of General Michel Aoun and rival militiamen of the Lebanese Forces (LF) traded heavy fire using 155 mm howitzers and multi-barrelled rocket-launchers at seven villages in the Keserwan area, some 20 km (12 miles) from Beirut.

"We could feel the earth shaking under our feet. At some stages the shells were slamming in at the rate of one each second," said Rima Hagi, a resident of Christian east Beirut.

The sources said at least two civilians were killed, among them an Indian national, and two militiamen wounded.

"East Beirut is facing a decisive week. There will be either an agreement or an explosion," said Ad Diyar daily newspaper, published in the Christian sector of the capital.

The fighting forced thousands of people to miss Sunday church services and hide in underground shelters.

Both sides blamed each other for starting the fight. The LF said two militiamen were wounded by the army's sniper fire and accused Aoun's troops of closing a crossing linking Beirut to northern militia-held areas.

Today's fighting was the worst violation of a shaky ceasefire reached on March 2 to halt fighting between Aoun's 15,000 troops and the LF's 10,000-man force. At least 820 people were killed and more than 2,650 wounded in the fighting that started on January 31.

The two forces are vying for the control of Lebanon's Christian enclave.

Diplomats and Christian political sources said an all-out war could soon erupt in the enclave where both armies were reported to be on high alert and fully prepared for a new round of violence.

Meanwhile, a previously unknown Muslim extremist group yesterday accused the West German government of mistreating two Shiite prisoners and threatened to retaliate.

"We warn the oppressive (West German) government of continuing its psychological war against our struggles," Mohammed and Abbas Hamadi and for not respecting freedom of worship and belief, "the organisation for defending the strugglers and detainees" said in a statement.

The one-page typed statement bore Quranic verses and was delivered to the offices of a Western news agency in Beirut.

Mohammed, Ali Hamadi is spending a life sentence in West Germany on terrorist charges, including the murdering of US Navy diver Robert Stethem aboard the TWA plane hijacked to Beirut on June, 1985. The killer was arrested at Frankfurt airport in Jan. 1987.

His brother, Abbas, was ordered jailed for 13 years by a Düsseldorf court in April 1988 for plotting the kidnapping of two West Germans in Lebanon in an attempt to secure his brother's freedom.

"The (West German) government recently practised the toughest kind of psychological torture and resorted to isolation and other moral pressures against our strugglers. This climaxed in preventing them from observing their religious rituals and worship duties," the statement said.

"We will not and never stay idle or be mere spectators," it said. "We warn against such actions that will only bear costly consequences for its initiators."

The imprisonment of the Hamadi brothers is believed connected to the abduction of two West German nationals in south Lebanon.

Thomas Kempfner, 28, and Heinrich Strubig, 48, were kidnapped on May 16, 1989, a few hours before a Frankfurt court sentenced Mohammed Ali Hamadi to life in prison.



Syrian President Hafez Al Assad (left) talks with Egyptian counterpart Hosni Mubarak in Tobruk, Libya, on Saturday. The presidents attended a meeting with Libyan leader Muammar Khaddafi which amounts to a show of solidarity with him in his confrontation with the West over the chemical plant at Rabia. (Reuters wirephoto)

Khaddafi renews call for Arab world unity

Assad stresses on joint action: Mubarak praised

CAIRO, March 25, (UPI): Libyan leader Muammar Khaddafi renewed his call for Arab unity yesterday as leaders of Egypt, Syria and Sudan joined him in celebrations marking the 20th anniversary of the British military withdrawal from Libya.

Cairo radio said President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, President Hafez Al Assad of Syria and President Omar Al Bashir of Sudan arrived at the Gamal Abdel Nasser air base in the Mediterranean town of Tobruk near the border with Egypt for the anniversary celebrations and meetings with Khaddafi.

Egyptian and Syrian air force planes joined Libyan aircraft in staging war games attended by the four Arab leaders.

In a speech marking the anniversary of the British pullout, Khaddafi

but these barriers cannot separate the Arab peoples from each other, as the Libyan and Egyptian peoples are one people and one family," Khaddafi said. Khaddafi praised Mubarak for refusing to allow US bombers to use his territory to attack Libya in April 1986, even though relations between Tripoli and Cairo at the time were at their worst.

"We had no telephone or personal contacts at that time, nor was there a fraternal and familiar air between us as there is now," Khaddafi said. The British Broadcasting Corp. monitored the broadcast.

"We were swearing at each other at that time. On the surface, it appeared that either side would aid an attack against the other."

"However, the truth is that we are brothers, a united nation, a united family, and the Americans cannot come between us," Khaddafi said. "If we quarrelled yesterday, we make it up today. All differences are blown away in the wind. What remains is the Arab nation."

Assad welcomed the convening of an emergency Arab summit and said joint Arab action must continue, but he gave no other details, according to Cairo radio.

Mubarak emphasised the need of reviving Arab solidarity to face emerging economic blocs particularly in Western Europe.

"The Arab nation is desperately in need of strong solidarity to be able to face the economic blocs in the world," Mubarak said.

Khaddafi gave Egypt a squadron of 10 military training aircraft, Cairo radio reported.

Sudan's Bashir, who seized power in Khartoum in a June 1989 coup, has said his country planned integration with Libya.

Sudan and Libya first announced their goal of political, economic and military integration earlier this month. Border restrictions between the two nations have already been abolished.

The United States cut off military and economic aid to Sudan March 9, citing a US rule which denies aid to governments taking power and failing to reinstate democratic freedoms within eight months.

said Arab countries had to overcome the differences of the past and unite in the face of dangers threatening the whole Arab world.

"The danger is greater than our personal positions, greater than regional borders, greater than our self interests," he said in a speech broadcast on Libyan television. "The danger threatens all the Arab and the enemy does not distinguish between this Arab or that Arab."

"We may have doubts about one another, but these doubts are the consequences of enemy conspiracies against us," he said.

Khaddafi frequently calls for the union of Libya with neighbouring states, and renewing his Arab unity call, warned that enemies of the Arab world created their borders to keep them divided.

"The existing borders in the Arab world are made by imperialism."

Arabs closing ranks for unity

Summit triumph for Mubarak

CAIRO, March 25, (Reuters): Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's weekend summit meeting with Syrian leader Hafez Al Assad in Libya marked a closing of Arab ranks prompted in part by radical changes sweeping the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Diplomatic and political analysts also viewed the Tobruk summit sponsored by Libyan leader Muammar Khaddafi as capping years of sustained effort by Mubarak in mending his country's relations with the Arab world.

Statements by Mubarak and Assad referred to the urgent need for Arab unity in the age of superpower detente and change in Europe.

"The Arab nation badly needs strong solidarity and unity of thought to be able to face economic blocs," said Mubarak.

Assad said: "Unless we move towards unity, the future of the Arab nation with all its countries will be in danger."

"This does not mean that we are pessimistic. We should be optimistic and we should couple this optimism with action."

Khaddafi cited the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel as an example of superpower detente working against Arab interests.

"The danger (threatening the Arabs) is greater than our personal positions, greater than regional borders, greater than our self interests," he said.

"The danger threatens all the (Arab) nation and the enemy does not distinguish between this Arab or that Arab," Khaddafi added.

Just back from a trip to the Middle East with former US President Jimmy Carter, Kenneth Stein, a director at the Carter Presidential Centre in Atlanta, said he was surprised at the depth of Arab resentment.

Stein said officials in Jordan, Egypt and Syria "believe there is a conspiracy — that Moscow is providing the bodies (Jews) and Washington is providing the money — and that United States and Soviet Union are doing this intentionally to hurt the Arabs."

"This (summit) is something of a triumph for Mubarak," said a Cairo-based Western diplomat. "He has managed to bend fences with Libya and Syria without giving anything away."

The only Arab country to have made peace with Israel, Egypt had long been at odds with the two states staunchly opposed to any form of compromise with the Jewish state.

Sudan to facilitate relief efforts soon

KHARTOUM, Sudan, March 25, (AP): The military government said yesterday that it had exerted all efforts with Western donors to facilitate the second phase of a relief operation to save 500,000 southerners from war and starvation.

A statement issued by the ruling 15-man military council said it would hold the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army responsible if it put obstacles in front of the relief operation which is supposed to start in early April.

"The government, since its previous initiative for implementing the first phase of the operation, has been exerting strenuous efforts to facilitate the task of the United Nations and other voluntary organisations," the statement said. It was carried by the official Sudan News Agency. The statement said it regretted

a statement issued last week by the rebels, claiming the relief programme was biased in favour of the government. The SPLA clandestine radio broadcast also suggested, without saying so outright, that the rebels might block the programme unless the United Nations decides to send more food to rebel-held areas.

The government, the United Nations and Western donors will hold a meeting in Khartoum tomorrow at an ambassadorial level to discuss implementing the second phase of Operation Lifeline. Last year, the relief effort is credited to saving thousands of lives which were threatened by a man-made famine.

Under the auspices of Operation Lifeline Sudan Two, the United Nations hopes to transport around 104,000 tonnes of relief supplies by helicopters, trains and barges.

Four kids injured in W. Bank violence

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, March 25, (Agencies): Two Arab boys were shot and wounded in the occupied West Bank and two were hurt by an explosion, Palestinian sources said yesterday.

Residents of Roujeb village, near Nablus, said Jewish settlers shot and wounded a six-year-old Palestinian boy in the head as he played in a field yesterday.

They said Tareq Mustafa Halabi was with his father, who was ploughing, when three Israelis shot at them from long range. The residents offered no explanation for the shooting.

Arab hospital officials said the boy's condition was critical. Israeli military sources confirmed a boy was wounded.

In the village of Tehoa near Bethlehem, two Palestinian boys aged 11 and 14 were wounded in the face, hands and legs when an unidentified object exploded near them overnight, Palestinian hospital officials said.

Last year there were several incidents in which Palestinian children in the West Bank were killed or injured when they apparently came upon unexploded flares and other explosives.

Soldiers shot and wounded a 10-year-old boy in the leg in Bethlehem overnight when they clashed with stone-throwing demonstrators, Palestinian sources said. The boy was a bystander during the clash, they said.

At least 635 Palestinians have been killed by Israelis during the uprising against Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip which erupted in December 1987. Forty four Jews have also died.

Elsewhere yesterday, a large army force backed by helicopters raided the village of Anabta in the West Bank and rounded up dozens of Palestinian activists suspected of violent activity, the army said.

"The action is part of continuing efforts taken by the Israel forces to lower the level of violence and restore order in West Bank and the Gaza Strip," said an army spokesman.

Israeli soldiers turned back a group of Jewish peace activists trying to enter a West Bank village yesterday to visit the family of an Arab farmer jailed over a land dispute with settlers.

The group of more than 40 activists, who traversed rough mountain terrain to avoid army roadblocks outside Beit Izza, 17 km (nine miles) northwest of occupied Jerusalem, also demanded an end to Israel's 23-year occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Soldiers ordered the activists to leave the vicinity of the hilltop village and showed them a military order harring non-residents from being there.

Israeli bulldozers have recently uprooted a large number of olive trees in Beit Sera village, Ramallah, a report from the occupied areas, said today.

Helping Jews exodus

Soviets, Israel plan sea line

NICOSIA, Cyprus, March 25, (Agencies): Soviet and Israeli officials have been visiting Cyprus and Greece to discuss setting up a maritime line to bring Soviet Jews to Israel. The London-based Al Hayat newspaper has reported.

The Arabic-language daily, in its Friday edition which reached Cyprus Saturday, quoted unnamed informed Greek and Arab sources as saying the officials were discussing sailing Greek- and Cyprus-registered ships between the Black Sea port of Odessa and the Israeli port of Haifa.

Officials in Cyprus and Greece could not be reached for comment yesterday, which was the first day of a holiday weekend in both countries on the occasion of Greek Independence Day.

Hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews are expected to emigrate to Israel in the next few years as the result of relaxed rules in the Soviet Union and tighter entry quotas in the United States.

The exodus has sparked an uproar in the Arab world, which fears that many of the newcomers could settle in the Israeli-occupied territories especially the West Bank.

The newspaper said the Soviets and Israelis hoped that a sea line could ease pressure on air flights, especially those of the overtaxed state-run Aeroflot.

The Soviet airline does not run direct flights to Israel. Instead, migrants just change at one of several transit points, of which

Vienna is the most used.

The London-based, Lebanese-owned Al Hayat said the Soviet and Israeli officials were planning to use Soviet nationals to crew Greek-flagged liners sailing between the Soviet Union and Israel.

In addition, Cyprus and the Soviet Union have recently concluded two shipping agreements. Under the first agreement, Soviet seamen are allowed to crew Cypriot vessels. Under the second, the Soviet Union actually re-flagged more than a dozen vessels in Cyprus.

Soviet officials at the time said the action was taken for purely commercial reasons, including access to Western services and Western credit.

Al Hayat said intelligence officials from both the Soviet Union and Israel made trips to the "area's ports" to inspect security arrangements.

An Israeli radio broadcast claimed last night that the Soviet Union has reiterated to a Jewish group in the United States that Moscow has holding firm to its policy of allowing Soviet Jews to leave the Soviet Union.

The PLO's Director of Information Jameel Helal has denied reports that the organisation handed Cairo a list of names of its prospective negotiator to the proposed Palestinian-Israeli dialogue in Cairo and said that reports in this regard are untrue.

MIDEAST BRIEFS

Arafat to visit Lanka: Palestine Liberation Organisation's leader Yasser Arafat is expected to visit Sri Lanka for the first time next month.

Reports said the PLO leader had shown some reluctance to visit Sri Lanka because of the presence of Israeli interests section in Colombo. But now that the Sri Lankan government has decided to close the Israeli interests section the visit of Arafat seems certain.

President Ranasinghe Premadasa last Tuesday ordered the Foreign Ministry to take necessary action to ensure the closure of the Israeli interests section by the April 20. (Kuna)

Israel, Greece talks: A delegation comprising 15 Greek industrialists and businessmen arrived in Israel today to confer with Israeli officials on promoting economic co-operation between Israel and Greece, Radio Israel reported Sunday.

The radio, monitored in Kuwait, quoted head of Israel's diplomatic mission in Athens as saying trade relations between Israel and Greece had recently improved remarkably compared to Israel's trade relations with EEC. (Kuna)

Afghan rebels turn selves in: Members of four armed opposition groups have switched to the side of the Afghan government, Afghanistan news agency Bakhtar announced on Sunday.

The agency added that about 150 rebels turned in themselves to Afghan authorities in Gendabaz, Samangan, Baghlan and Kunduz provinces and expressed readiness to participate in the national reconciliation process.

Meanwhile, nine missiles exploded in Kabul on Saturday, killing one person and injuring another 14. They were fired by rebels from the areas of Paghman and Kuba-Safi. (Kuna)

Alatas clears stand: Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas on Sunday said Israel's building of settlements in occupied Arab territories was illegal and condemned the immigration of Soviet Jews to the Jewish state.

Alatas spoke to reporters after a meeting with Butros Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs.

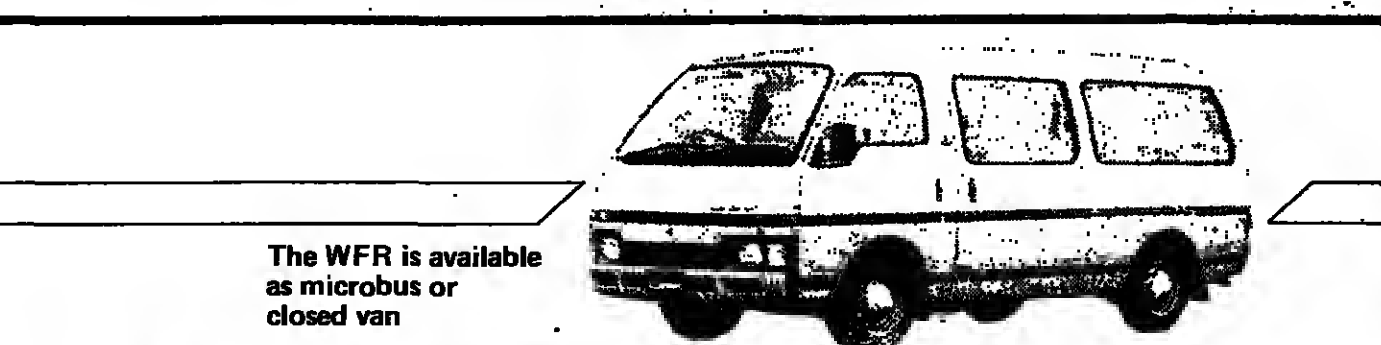
The Indonesian situation is very clear. The Israeli settlements in the occupied territories are totally illegal and against international law. (AP)

Jordan warns against gatherings: The Jordanian Interior Ministry warned on Saturday Jordanians against congregating publicly without taking into consideration practiced laws organising public gathering.

The warning was announced in a statement in light of increased unpermitted public congregations.

The ministry said that authorities will arrest violators of the laws of the country, calling for respecting the law when holding such gatherings or inviting people to attend them. (Kuna)

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Stench of burning grain lingers in rebel-held Ethiopia port

MASAWA, Ethiopia, March 25, (Reuters): A faint stench of burning grain and rotting corpses still lingers at St George's Church in the rebel-held port of Masawa.

"Jesus Christ bless and forgive us," the worshippers sing, kneeling amid rubble in their war-ravaged church three weeks after rebels captured this city on the sweltering Red Sea coast.

Women swathed in white shawls quietly leave the morning Mass and stroll past sandal-shod fighters of the rebel Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), which wants an independent state in Eritrea province.

The guns are silent, air raids have stopped and hundreds of tanks have rumbled away from the charred buildings of this ancient city built on two islands linked to the mainland by a causeway.

Townpeople who fled during the battle for Masawa, Eritrea's main port, in mid-February are returning as bombed shops reopen and children laugh and play on wrecked tanks in the narrow, winding streets.

But across the bay, a massive stock of food aid sent by foreign donors to relieve famine in northern Ethiopia still smokes and smoulders.

"I heard the food was burning, that's why I came here, to try to save some grain from the fire," says Maybotot Omer, clad in a stained cloak and turban and shaking a sieve of charred wheat.

Behind him, a sweating man digs into a mountain of charred burlap bags, each stamped "Gift of the European Economic Com-

munity."

Residents say Soviet-built MiG jets of the Ethiopian Air Force bombed Masawa for 10 days after the EPLF gained control on February 16.

The grain had been brought in by relief agencies to feed some of the 4.5 million victims of drought and civil war in Ethiopia who face food shortages this year.

In the port, local people point to a 100-metre (yard) line of rotting wheat on the sea front where government soldiers stacked sacks of grain like sandbags to make fortifications.

The UN World Food Programme says more than 50,000 tonnes of grain, enough to feed more than three million people for a month, were stored in Masawa.

KUWAIT ... GULF

Illiteracy eradication primary task: Khubaizi

889m illiterate around the globe

THE head of research and studies section at the National Committee for Education, Culture and Science Adel Khubaizi has said that the International Year for the Eradication of Illiteracy focuses primarily on ending illiteracy by the end of this century. He added that UNESCO approved several aims for the year calling the member states that suffer from illiteracy to apply efforts to put an end to this problem by educating people in the country side specially women and girls.

The conference called for the promulgation of a plan to end illiteracy since it is one

of the main international problems of our age. It is also connected with poverty and underdevelopment. Illiteracy cannot be fought without primary education to people, Khubaizi said. We believe that this problem needs ten years to be solved," he added.

Commenting on illiteracy around the world, Khubaizi said that figures recorded showed a marked improvement during the 1960s and education increased considerably during the 1970s and 1980s in the Third World. He added that large numbers of adults register at adult education schools. Their numbers increased from 1,708

million in 1975 to 2,314 million in 1985 marking an increase of 35 per cent in ten years.

Khubaizi added that according to UNESCO's statistics there were 889 million illiterate people around the world in 1985 and all of them were over 15 years old. He added that 36.3 per cent of these people were Asians (666 million illiterate) then followed by Africans who reached 162 million. He added that 669 million of these illiterates were from the Third World (98 per cent of total illiterate in the world) while only 20 million illiterates were registered in the industrial countries. He added that there are about 84 million young illiterates between 15 and 19 year old. About 100 million children between 6 and 11 year old in the Third World were not registered in schools in 1985.

UNESCO will organise two conferences on illiteracy eradication during this year, one during this month and other next September during celebrations of the International Year of Illiteracy Eradication, Khubaizi said. The second conference will be an international conference for education ministers around the world, he said.

Step up awareness on Aids: Gezairi

ABU DHABI, March 25, (Reuters): Arab countries must do more to educate people, especially the young, about the risks of getting Aids, a World Health Organisation (WHO) official said.

"To avoid the spread of the disease, Arab states must give more attention to awareness campaigns and public debate about the disease," Hussein Gezairi, WHO Mediterranean region director, said in an interview this week.

Asked during a visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) whether this should include schools, he said: "Of course, everybody should know there is a disease called Aids and how it is communicated."

Most Arab countries have been reluctant to openly discuss or report cases of acquired immune deficiency syndrome (Aids), which is transmitted through sexual intercourse, especially between homosexuals, and via infected blood.

Some Arab officials say their conservative societies and Islamic principles can protect them from Aids.

"In our region, (reported) Aids cases now exceed 500," said Gezairi, whose area covers the Arab world, Iran, Pakistan, Cyprus, and Afghanistan.

"But, many people have the virus but have not developed the disease. This means we certainly have thousands of cases," he said.

He said Arab states should coordinate anti-Aids campaigns and that rich Gulf states could help the poorer ones.



Officers training

Under the auspices of the acting undersecretary at Kuwait's Ministry of Interior Major General Mohammed Al Qabandi, a graduation ceremony was organised to distribute certificates to trainees who participated in the second integrated training programme which has been organised by the vocational expertise centre. The training course took place at the Computer Centre during the period from March 9th to 22nd and was attended by 26 officers in addition to two civilians. The ceremony attended by the director of Computer Centre Fahad Jaafar. Picture shows Qabandi with the graduates.

Legal Clinic

SHOULD you have a legal, labour-related or similar problem, kindly send your questions to: Arab Times Legal Clinic. Our Kuwaiti lawyer, Khaled Taher, replies to readers' queries. Write to Legal Clinic, Arab Times, P.O. Box 2270, 13023 Safat, Kuwait or fax your questions on Fax No. 4847495.

MY RELATIVE completed five years service with a transport company as an operator and heavy equipment driver. He left the company last year after termination of his services. The law of Kuwait says that if you have completed three years in one company, they don't have any reason to hold you if you don't want to work with them. Now, I want to know why the company did not give him release despite letting him look for another job. My cousin gave them two job acceptances but the manager refused to give the release. Finally, when he gave them the third job acceptance, they cancelled his visa and gave him one month to find a job or leave the country. Please advise.

Narissa

ANY employee, in my opinion, would like to continue employment for a long time. The three years rule has been applied so that if there is a problem or a dispute, after completing the stipulated period, an employee can consider changing jobs. However, this doesn't mean that a person must change the residence every three years.

It is difficult for any company to bring a new employee each time an employee jumps ship. So, most companies refuse to give the release. Each company has to spend a lot of time and money on training an employee. Most employees like their employees to work for them, and when anyone accepts their employee, they don't feel too good seeing him leave his job. Companies want to hold on to employees for as long as they can.

If you have completed three years, try to get the release from the Ministry of Social Affairs, submitting papers of acceptance by the new employer.

MY COUSIN worked in a company for five years and was recently terminated; and he has now found a new job but his former

employer does not want to give him a release and wants him to go back. Can the law help my cousin get a release? Whom should we contact? Also, he has a car whose registration is running out. As he has no visa, can he transfer the car to my name? I am holding visa No. 20.

Ms Leony.

IF HE has worked for over five years, and has the acceptance of a new job, take the papers of acceptance from the new job and file a case through the Ministry of Social Affairs to get a release. He can keep the car, after coming back on a fresh visa, or regularising his papers, he can inform the traffic department about his new address, submit a copy of the new residence and re-register the car.

I CAME to Kuwait in 1976 on visa No. 20. I transferred it to visa No. 18 in 1986. After three years, I joined another company. My residence expires in April 1990. After returning from leave, I lost my job. I want to transfer my residence permit to my present employer. I have not worked continuously for three years with the previous employer but I have lived in Kuwait for more than 10 years. Please advise?

Rasool Ahmed.

IF you have worked more than three years, get the papers of the new sponsor who is accepting you to work there, and then get the transfer acceptance of both the old and the new sponsor.

SINCE our annual leave is calculated on 26 days basis according to Kuwait Labour Law, are the private sector employees entitled to avail Fridays and other public holidays? Can we accumulate these days and add them to our annual leave?

Victor and friends.

THE annual leave of 14 or 21 days is 14 or 21 working days and not calendar days.

This means that Fridays are excluded from annual leave. Any annual leave must be counted on working days, and this means that Fridays would be added to the number of leave days.

The law does not mention anything about how to calculate official holidays. If the official holidays fall in the middle of the holiday, they come under vacation. Usually, an employee can start his annual leave after the last day of the official holidays. This way, he can go on leave when the holidays start.

WE have been working under a contractor doing a motorway project since October, 1987. When the project was completed, we were terminated due to "end of contract" by the main contractor. We applied for transfer of residence to another government project of similar nature but our application was rejected on the ground that we have not completed three years. The Labour Law, 87/1989, Article 16, last paragraph says "Upon the expiry of the government contract, the employer may transfer such labourer to another employer of a similar project..." We do not find any reason for rejecting our applications. We seek your advice.

M.S. Hossain

ACTUALLY, you have answered your question. As you say, Article 16 does mention that on expiry of a government contract, the employer can transfer such labourers to another project of a similar nature; however, this must be done after completing three years with one employer.

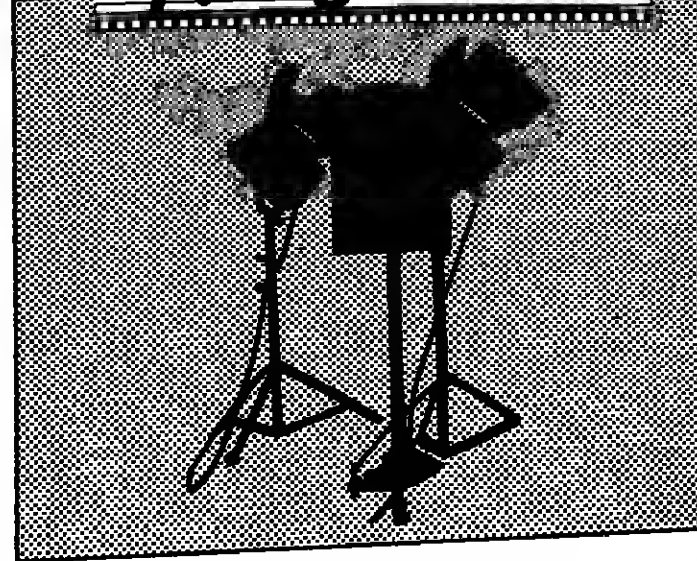
The decision to exempt a group of workers from the three-year rule depends on the discretion of the Minister of Social Affairs. I suggest you write to the minister, through your employer, asking him to exempt you and approve your transfer to the new employer.

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International Meteorology Day celebrations held

THE International Meteorology Organisation along with world meteorology department and authority celebrated the International Meteorology Day. This year's celebration marks the fortieth anniversary of implementing the special draft for the International Meteorology Organisation. The organisation includes 161 member world countries with Kuwait becoming member in 1962.

Director of the meteorology department, Abdullah Al Asfour stated that the organisation has many goals to facilitate international co-operation in order to establish atmospheric and water based meteorology stations, encourage establishment of meteorology centres and international communications systems for rapid exchange of data.

This year's celebration will concentrate on the role played by meteorology departments and centres in reducing the number of natural disasters by accurate weather predictions and issuing prior warnings. He added that the meteorological department has a fully qualified national staff including engineers, technicians, meteorology specialists, and supportive staff.

In a related development the director of meteorological department at the Civil Aviation

Authority Abdulla Al Asfour said the department issues a meteorological bulletin every six hours about weather conditions expected in the next 24 hours and sent to the different specialised authorities in the world.

The department also provides television, Kuna and local newspapers with weather reports in Kuwait and the temperatures in the different countries of the world. It also provides a number of local relevant authorities with bulletins of weather like the coastal station, coastal guards, Kuwait Army, MEW, Communications Ministry, Touristic Enterprises Company, KISR, Sea Club and the Public Authority for Agriculture the official said.

He added that the department seeks to enhance meteorological service by developing the communications lines with Jeddah Centre and using computers in storing informations on weather maps. The department will also benefit from the super computer that will be installed at the Regional Meteorological Centre in Jeddah and plans are afoot to establish a section for marine prediction and marine observatories beside training the staff of department.

ADC honours Saqr in Washington

WASHINGTON, March 25, (Kuna): Abdul Aziz Al Saqr, president of the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry, was given an appreciation award here today by the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) for his years of unflinching support to the organisation and to Arab-Americans.

The award was received by Abdul Aziz's son, Hamad Abdul Aziz Al Saqr — who flew here specially for the occasion — during a luncheon marking the tenth anniversary convention of ADC, attended by hundreds of Arab-Americans, Arabs, and American officials and experts.

In accepting the award on behalf of his father, Hamad Al Saqr read a message from Abdul Aziz Al Saqr who hailed the efforts of ADC over the last ten years and stressed the importance of the role Arab-Americans and their organisations are playing in bridging the gap between the US and the Arab world.

Special KU programme for talented students

THE University of Kuwait has decided to adopt a new project aimed at introducing special programmes for talented and secondary stage students. The project aims at developing students talents and cultural capabilities and to direct them towards colleges and studies to match their abilities and interests.

The Training and Scientific Consultation Office at Kuwait University Sciences College will supervise the implementation of this project which will start its first programme as of the summer of this academic year. The first programme will be organised as an experiment in mathematics to be followed by other sciences and specialities in the years to follow.

A local daily stated that these programmes are basically introduced for Kuwaiti students, but 25 per cent of the total enrollment will be accorded to non-Kuwaitis. The students will be distributed among groups supervised by a number of university professors.

University sources stated that these programmes which are being developed upon modern methods are essentially aimed at providing students with special care and follow up.

Director of the Training and Scientific Consultations Office at the university, Dr Majed Al Naqeb stated that these programmes aim at discovering outstanding students in all fields. He said that students scheduled to participate in the programmes will be nominated by the Ministry of Education this year.

Sources at the Ministry of Education pointed out that this year's programmes will include the participation of students from the third and fourth secondary stages only due to the small time. Students will be offered special incentives and tools and will obtain graduation certificates after completing the course.

Separate branches will be organised for girls and boys and teaching will be conducted in Arabic with the possibility of opening a branch where English will be the medium of teaching.

Vertical housing approach advocated

THE Minister of State for Municipal Affairs Mohammad Al Sayed Abdul Mohsen Al Refai has said that the solution to the scarcity of land for construction of housing projects will be surmounted in the new towns in Subiya and Zoor through the vertical construction approach.

Speaking to a local daily, the minister highlighted the important role played by Kuwait Municipality in solving this problem. He said that the housing problem essentially boiled down to the inability to provide housing units at an area of 400 square metres. He stressed the importance of resorting to the vertical building approach in a bid to meet the constantly increasing demand for government houses due to the rapid growth of population.

Refai laid great stress on the need to develop a fully integrated housing strategy based on accurate figures and statistics to meet the project demand for government housing in the future. He added that it is equally important to reduce the area allocated for each unit.

He commented that it would be recommendable and easily applicable to provide several designs for the housing units provided by the government whereby applicants would be free to choose the design deemed appropriate for their living needs.

The government is currently sponsoring studies aimed at reclaiming new housing lands that could meet the demand for project construction. The National Housing Authority is currently preparing to construct 18,000 housing units in different places in the country, the official said.

Meanwhile, a well-informed source at the Higher Housing Council has said that the availability of land fit for construction of housing projects had been the number one item of discussion by the council at its last session.

The source said that all service ministries would undertake a wide-scale survey operation in downtown Kuwait to locate the areas available for housing purposes.

The sources pointed out that the council would at its next session discuss the design of the government houses, adding that future housing projects were expected to be constructed in places such as the Murgab, Wateh, East Maqwa and others in Shadaiya, Kheitan and others.



Parallel education course

A graduation ceremony honouring parallel education graduates for the academic year 88/89 was held at the parallel education headquarters in Sharq under the patronage of the general director of the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training.

The ceremony was attended by the authority deputy director, engineer Hmoud Al Modhef, the undersecretary of the Ministry of Education, Abdul Rahman Al Khodier, the assistant undersecretary for private education Yaqoub Al Sharrah and a number of officials.

The ceremony included honouring 28 graduates.

Contract to build new market signed

THE Public Works Minister Abdul Rahman Al Houti signed recently a contract to build and maintain the Fish, Meat and Vegetables Market in its old site at Kuwait City. The contract costs about KD4,300,000 and will be carried out by a local company.

Houti stressed on the importance of the market and its location describing it as the main nerve of commerce and commented that commercial activities in the nearby markets were frozen after closure of the old market of fish, meat and vegetables. He added that opening the market again after being re-built and maintained will return life to the commercial activities in that area and other close areas. The project is due to be completed in 600 days.

The project includes the re-establishment of markets of fish, meat and vegetables as they were in their old sites with new construction materials, new network of public utilities to prevent pollution and building a car park for 300 cars to serve these markets. The vegetables market will consist of 132 stands and 55 groceries for vegetables. The meat market will consist of 51 butcheries, 79 stores of foodstuffs and 79 other shops for general use. The fish market will consist of 96 stands with a special square for the wholesale. Offices for relevant ministries and authorities like Municipality, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Interior, brokers, and cafes as well as a system to collect and transport garbage will be built at these markets.

12 years for ex-con

THE Criminal Court sentenced an ex-con to 12 years of penal servitude to be followed by deportation.

The court heard that the man entered the country illegally and when a suspecting patrol officer asked to see his ID, the man produced a document that was later discovered as forged.

When the ID-card produced by the suspect raised the suspicions of the officer, he asked the accused to accompany him to the station. However the man produced a gun from under his clothes pointed it at his arresting officer.

A parked police patrol vehicle was waiting on the street and the man managed to get the officers to surrender their guns and forced them to drive out of the city in the direction of the desert where he dropped them off at a cut-off place and drove away.

The officers walked on to the Sulabiya Station and managed to inform on him in time for another police patrol to pick him as he attempted to penetrate the border in an attempt to flee the country illegally.

Cabinet slams US stance on Jerusalem

Blow to Mideast peace efforts

KUWAIT, March 25, (Kuna): In a strongly-worded statement condemning the US Senate's approval of a draft resolution recognising the unified Jerusalem as capital of the Zionist entity, Kuwait today called on the United States to adhere to the UN and international resolutions which consider Israel's annexation of Jerusalem null and void.

The Council of Ministers has followed with great concern recent press reports indicating that the US Senate sanctioned a draft resolution that recognises Jerusalem as capital of Israel, considering the step a blow to the peace efforts and a challenge to the international will, in general, and the Arab and Islamic will, in particular, said State Minister for Cabinet Affairs Rashed Abdul Aziz Al Rashed.

Rashed stated, following the regular weekly cabinet session which was presided over by HH the Crown Prince and Premier Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, that Kuwait calls on the international community to intensify efforts to prevent and act that might hinder the Mideast peace process or increase the Palestinian people's agony.

The council has followed with satisfac-

tion the recent agreement between Oman and Saudi Arabia concerning demarcation of their frontiers and praised such a move which will have a positive impact on the peoples of the two countries as well as the GCC states' co-operation march, Rashed added.

League

He said Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmed presented to the council a report on the outcome of the Arab League's 93rd session held recently in Tunis which tackled pressing Arab issues, topped by the Soviet Jews migration to occupied Palestine, situation in Lebanon, progress of peace negotiations between Iraq and Iran in addition to the issue of moving the League's headquarters to Cairo.

Sheikh Sabah also submitted another report on the outcome of the first EEC-GCC foreign ministers joint meeting held lately in Muscat, Oman with the aim of boosting and promoting bilateral co-operation between the two sides.

The council, Rashed said, praised results of the meeting and hoped it would lead to establishing a genuine co-operation between countries of the two groupings

based on the mutual interests and equal footing.

The council was informed by Sheikh Sabah on the outcome of his recent visit to Namibia during which he participated in its independence celebrations and conferred with its newly President Sam Nujoma on means for fostering and enhancing bilateral ties, Rashed went on.

Oil talks

For his part, Oil Minister Sheikh Ali Al Khalifa briefed the cabinet on his recent visit to Hungary and his talks with senior officials there topped by President Matyas Szoros which centred on developing bilateral oil and investment co-operation in light of current positive political and economic changes sweeping that Eastern European country.

Sheikh Ali also spoke of the outcome of his recent visit to Bahrain in addition to results of Opec's oil price and production monitoring committee which was held recently in Vienna.

Rashed indicated that Social Affairs and Labour Minister Sheikh Nasser Mohammed, Al Ahmed informed the council on the outcome of recent visits to

the country by Tunisian State Minister for Social Affairs Dr Nabih Kadana and Egyptian Immigration and Egyptians abroad Minister Dr Fuad Eskander.

Commerce and Industry Minister Faisal Al Khaled summed up the cabinet on outcomes of the first session of the Kuwaiti-Egyptian joint trade committee, which wound up deliberations recently in Cairo.

Khaled said the committee discussed ways of expanding bilateral commercial co-operation through ratifying an agreement to encourage such a goal. Khaled furthermore informed the council on his talks with Polish Foreign Economic Minister Marcin Swiacki who visited here lately.

Rashed said that Higher Education Minister Dr Ali Al Shamlan briefed the Cabinet on his visit to England lately and nature of talks he conducted there as well as his meeting with Kuwaiti students studying in British colleges.

Concluding, Rashed said the council discussed outcome of a meeting for the higher housing council and approved its decisions in addition to reviewing several other local issues.



Envoys present credentials

The credentials of the ambassadors of the United Kingdom and Ireland were presented yesterday to HH the Amir at a ceremony held at Bayan Palace. The ceremony was attended by Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister, Minister of Amiri Diwan Affairs, Undersecretary at the Amiri Diwan and head of the Amiri Guards.

Israeli claim to Jerusalem denounced

RIYADH, March 25, (Kuna): Gulf newspapers denounced in their editorials today the American Congress resolution that advocated Israel's claim to Jerusalem as its undivided capital.

The Saudi 'Al Riyadh' newspaper wrote under the title 'Jerusalem between Israeli blackmail and the American official stance,' that the occupied holy city is not a casual case to be decided upon by a couple of people or groups that think they have the full say on the issue.

The Saudi daily added that Jerusalem is not only a political matter but a religious one as well because of its spiritual stature for three heavenly religions.

It charged that the United States is willing to back down on its principles in order to secure its interests by handing over the ruling authority to Israel.

Sensitive

Concluding the paper asked the United States to study the sensitive issue with a sensible approach and not an emotional one for finding a solution that serves the interest of both parties.

Meanwhile, a Qatari daily also commented on the American stance, saying the Congress resolution was designed to put extra pressure on the Arabs.

'Al Sharq' paper noted that the Israelis were not prevented from visiting their holy shrines when Jerusalem was divided, pointing out that the accusations were not defended through the Arab media.

Ramadan meat price fixed at 750 fils

THE chairman of the board and managing director of the Live-stock Trading and Transport Company has said that the company imported large orders of live sheep and cows of different species.

He told Seyassah that the company had provided all its local butcheries with a type of the most commonly selling mutton (Tali), and that 1.4 million livestock heads were imported into the country in March. He stressed that selling prices would undergo no changes during the holy month of Ramadan and will never exceed KD0.750 for each kilo.

He said that the company would provide home-delivery services to consumers in different places in the country, adding that more new live sheep selling centres had been established in Al Rai area.

He pointed out that the vaccination of prices of live sheep was the result of varying purchase, transport and penning costs.



Computer course

The director general of the General Administration of Civil Defence Col Khaled Rashed Al Qu'od patronised the graduation ceremony for a computer and information training course. The course was held by GACD in co-operation with the Computer Centre of the Interior Ministry. Col Al Qu'od distributed graduation certificates at the end of the ceremony.

Survey to combat diseases in cattle

SULAIBIYA cattle farms will be subjected to a comprehensive survey intended to eradicate diseases among cows suffering from tuberculosis, brucellosis and pallor which have resulted in KD10 million losses incurred by owners reliable sources said and added that the government will compensate owners to offset such losses.

To highlight this issue and methods to counter these diseases in the future, a local daily interviewed a number of ranch owners and officials from Kuwait's Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources.

Speaking on the issue, Abdul Wahhab Al Hunayan, deputy chairman of dairy producers union, called for banning the import of cows from countries prone to these epidemics. The survey, he said will cover all the 34 ranches in the Sulaihiya area which house about 15,000 head of Australian, Indian, German and Dutch cows. All infected cows will be slaughtered and the carcasses destroyed. It is estimated that about 35 to 40 per cent of cows will face the axe.

Compensation

Commenting on the level of compensation to be provided by the government, the official said that the amount of KD200 per cow is totally insufficient as each cow costs KD881. It will not be financially viable to bear such losses, he added. Moreover, to compound the dilemma of ranchers, they will incur further losses resulting from the short supply of dairy milk which will continue for ten months. Presently ranches produce about 112,000 litres daily. Presuming that 50 per cent of cows will be slaughtered, it will mean production of only 56,000 litres of milk daily. The official called on the government to review the amount of compensation as the allocated amounts at present represent only about 25 per cent of losses.

Meanwhile, the official attributed the diseases among other things to the ranch areas, clarifying that these areas had remained unchanged for the past twenty years, although the number of cows had increased about three fold. He said that there are some ranches with 5,000 square metres with 200 heads, others of 30,000 square metres with 400-500 heads, followed by 120,000 square metres with about 600 heads and one with 150,000 square metres which is the largest ranch in Kuwait.

He said that ranchers had called on authorities several times to provide them with increased areas of land as in congested areas the diseases among cows spreads rapidly. Adequate areas will permit isolating these sick cows. He added that there is a lot of

land available in Sulaihiya and there is no need to shift the ranches to another place and suggested providing larger areas to owners of small ranches.

Spread

Further, he said that the diseases could be attributed to the import of buffaloes from plagued countries and commented that importers strive only to make quick profits. He pointed out that these imported buffaloes were penned in farms adjacent to the union's ranches. He pointed out that the union had informed the authorities that local ranches could provide 75 per cent of the country's beef. However, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry had replied that the local market is a liberal one and will remain open to all.

He said that the lack of experts in diagnosing cow diseases had also played a significant role in the spread of the disease and called on officials to extend the necessary co-operation to ranch owners in this respect. He also called for the provision of a modern laboratory along with specialists. He cited as an example, his own ranch where two years ago pregnancy rates were 75 per cent, but present it stands at 50 per cent only.

Sterility among cows adds to the burdens of ranchers, Hunyan said.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Director General of the Livestock Affairs at Kuwait's Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources, Dr Sultan Ahmed Sultan was quoted as saying that the expansion of the ranches was not a priority. He commented that focus should centre on application of the technical specification and health conditions by ranchers in view of the free services rendered to ranch owners.

He said that the authority will discuss with ranchers the format for destroying infected cows and the banning of the imports of cows from countries known to suffer from epidemics.

Sultan confirmed the authority's keenness to extend every co-operation to distribute ranches and will not hesitate to bring livestock experts into the country when the need arises. Countries known to have epidemics in cattle have been placed on a ban, the official said and imports presently are only from Europe.

The official confirmed that the authority is in close contact with the office in Paris which provides necessary data about the cow diseases at any place in the world. Further, the authority since its establishment co-operates with UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and had invited several visiting experts from different countries.

Funds being raised for children in Palestine

By Lima Al Khalafawi
Arab Times staff

CONCENTRATION on providing early care for children in the occupied lands is the main issue for strengthening a sense of belonging to the lands, according to the President of the Palestinian Women Association (PWA) — Kuwait, Siham Dabagh.

Dabagh said during a press conference yesterday at PWA premises that contribution campaigns are intended to support the programme of Early Childhood Care in the occupied lands. She added that such programmes have established three centres in Gaza Strip, Jerusalem and Acre. The fourth centre will soon be opened in Nasra.

Dabagh said that the main objective of the programmes are to provide national education, train teachers to upgrade the social level of mothers, cover budget deficits at kindergartens and increase the importance of self reliance.

She said that the proposed budget for such programmes is about \$910,000 and added that the Women's Committee is working to provide the amount through the contributions of firms and individuals in Kuwait.

Fahd visits shield forces

HAJF AL-BATIN, March 25, (Kuna): King Fahd Bin Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia has stressed that the Gulf Co-operation Council states "are not against any country."

Speaking during a visit to the Peninsula Shield Force headquarters, King Fahd expressed his pleasure for the presence of the force on Saudi soil.

The peninsula shield force is for the defence of the GCC states and their religious belief, said King Fahd.

In addition to Kuwait, the Gulf co-operation Council includes Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates.

Shahbazi returns home

TEHRAN, March 25, (Kuna): Iranian chairman of the joint chief of staff Ali Shahbazi returned here at dawn today ending a one week visit to Pakistan, Radio Tehran said.

During the visit he met with ranking Pakistani officials including President Ghulam Ishaque Khan, Premier Benazir Bhutto, defence minister, and chief of staff, and discussed bilateral co-operation.

He told the radio that his talks with Pakistani officials were fruitful and very important. He did not elaborate.

The Pakistani Prime Minister has described Pakistani-Iranian relations as excellent, and expressed hope to boost them in the future.

The radio said that Shahbazi has inspected a number of military installations during his stay in Pakistan.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Amiri cables

KUWAIT, March 25, (Kuna): HH the Amir today sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Greece on the occasion of his country's national day.

HH the Crown Prince and Premier Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Salem Al Sabah also sent a cable of congratulations to the Greek President Xenophon Zolotas on the occasion of his country's national day.

Antiquities exhibition

KUWAIT, March 25, (Kuna): Dar Al Athar Al Islamiyya (The Islamic Antiquities House) will display here a rare collection of Islamic art objects from the Hermitage Museum of Leningrad in the Soviet Union. The one-month exhibition will be open for the public as of next May 1, and arrangement for it has been the fruit of intensive efforts by the director of the house Sheikh Hissa Sabah Al Salem.

The Hermitage is known to have the most important collection of Islamic art in the Soviet Union and the exhibition of its holdings outside the Soviet Union will be for the first time in its history.

The exhibition will give the chance for the public to see 120 pieces of old Islamic art.

At the same time an exhibition of art from Daghestan will also be on show at Dar Al Athar Al Islamiyyah.

On the other hand, a collection of objects of Islamic art from Dar Al Athar Al Islamiyya will be on display at the Hermitage next July.

Traffic council meets

KUWAIT, March 25, (Kuna): Interior Minister Sheikh Salem Al Sabah yesterday chaired the first meeting for the Higher Council for Traffic.

Sheikh Salem delivered a speech in which he welcomed the new and old members.

The conference further tackled all aspects of the traffic problem and exchanged views on this respect.

Culture co-operation

KUWAIT, March 25, (Kuna): Assistant Rector of Kuwait University for Community and Information Services Dr Rasha Al Sabah yesterday received Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's advisor and member of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party Georgy Arbatov and the accompanying delegations.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed ways of boosting scientific and cultural co-operation between Kuwait University and America and Canada Institute, an affiliate to the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

The Soviet official is also chairman of the foreign affairs committee at the parliament and director of the institute.

Arbatov is accompanied by chairman of the Middle East department in the institute Dr Andrey Shumminji and Dr Adel Masaud of Kuwait Embassy to the Soviet Union.

GCC information meeting

RIYADH, March 25, (Kuna): Information officers at youth and sports bodies in the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) states yesterday began their first meeting at the secretariat headquarters.

A statement by the secretariat general said that the two-day meeting will discuss several important issues presented by some member states and the secretariat general on informational coverage and documentation of the joint youth and sports activities among the GCC.

The meeting will also discuss exchanging visits between the concerned employees.

The GCC is made up of UAE, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Digital seminar

KUWAIT, March 25, (Kuna): Communications Minister Abdullah Al Sharhan yesterday said that the ministry is to adopt the advanced Integrated Services Digital Network.

Sharhan, addressing a seminar on the integrated services digital network held at Kuwait International Hotel, said the ministry is preparing a feasibility study in co-operation with Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research and other local and international institutions in this effect.

Such an advanced system will provide vital services for industrial, economic, cultural and financial sectors which can link printed, visual and audio data in one digital network of high frequency.

Representatives of major telecommunications firms and the international telecommunications union will lecture in this two-day seminar.

Earthquake hits Iranian town

NICOSIA, March 25, (Reuter): An Iranian desert town where 25,000 people were killed by earthquakes nearly 12 years ago, was rocked today by a tremor measuring 5.4 on the Richter scale, Tehran radio reported.

The radio, received in Cyprus, said there were reports yet of damage from the pre-dawn quake near Tabas which was followed by an aftershock with a strength of 3.9 on the open-ended Richter scale.

A series of more powerful earthquakes devastated Tabas a town of mud houses in the desert 540 km (340 miles) southeast of Tehran, in September 1978.

KIMS courses end

KUWAIT, March 25, (Kuna): Planning Minister and Acting Health Minister Dr Abdul Rahman Al Awadi has stressed that physicians who increase their scientific know-how must be promoted accordingly.

Speaking exclusively to Kuna, Awadi said that the health ministry is keen to boost the capabilities of physicians, in order to catch up with the latest information in the world of medicine.

Forgers get one year in prison

THE Criminal Court sentenced two men to one year imprisonment each with hard labour for carrying out a forgery on a work permit.

The court acquitted a third man after finding the evidence not enough for his involvement in the forgery. The complainant told the court that one day one of the two defendants visited him at the work site. There, the defendant claimed he could make work permits against only KD200. The complainant gave the defendant KD100 in advance and asked him to make three work permits for his relatives.

One month later, the second defendant came to him and gave him photocopies of 3 work permits sent to him by the first defendant. When the complainant asked him about the originals, he told him he would get them only after paying the remaining KD600.

He did not want to give the original work permits. The complainant went to the labour department in order to confirm that the work permits he got were genuine where he was told that they were fake. The court was told that the defendants got the work permit of one man, took several photocopies of it and installed the names of the complainant's relatives on them.

THE Criminal Court sentenced a man called Abdul Rahman to 7 years with hard labour and ordered his deportation later for attempting to murder another man. Taha. The court was told that the defendant had planned to kill the complainant and prepared the necessary weapon, (a knife) for that purpose.

Then he went to the place of work of the complainant at a co-operative society and asked him to go with him for a small discussion. When they were together, the defendant took out the knife and stabbed the complainant in the belly aiming at killing him. He tried to stab him again, but Taha ran away and screamed for help. In the court, the defendant admitted attempting to murder Taha but said that it was in self-defence and because of a quarrel between them.

Iran, NZ sign memo

TEHRAN, March 25, (Kuna): Iran and New Zealand signed a memo of understanding to promote co-operation in the economic and technical fields, it was announced here today.

Radio Tehran, monitored by Kuna, said the memo was signed by Iranian Agriculture Minister Issa Kalanary, currently leading a delegation to New Zealand, and New Zealand external relations and Trade Minister Mike Moore.

The memo, the radio added, calls for expanding relations in commercial exchanges, technology, implementation of joint ventures while focusing on agricultural projects such as forestry and pastures.

Khalifa meets Waly

MANAMA, March 25, (Kuna): Amir of Bahrain Sheikh Issa Bin Salman Al Khalifa met here today with the regional representative of the UN developing programme Waly Shah.

Communications Ministry endeavours to develop trade

THE assistant undersecretary for the General Administration of Transport Affairs at the Ministry of Communications Sager Al Sudan has said that the ministry continues endeavours to develop trading performance and support trading activities.

He said that the ministry would once in a while reshuffle its organisational structure in an attempt to meet the new developments and requirements, adding that the administration had of late restructured its existing

organisational set-up accordingly, whereby procedures had been further simplified and transactions processed quicker.

He pointed out that all departments of the administration had been relocated in one building within the framework of the recent plan to ensure quicker processing of transactions, improve performance and save time.

He added that the administration had opened new offices to facilitate the registration

procedures for small hunting and sailing vessels, stressing that these offices were set up in areas close to vital sea points.

He said that the ministry had prepared a field study of the sites deemed dangerous for navigation and that 26 new such sites had been defined, but signs and markers need to be set up to indicate the danger involved in sailing or navigating in these areas.

He said that the administra-

tion had also started to consider the regulation of overland transport licences to be commensurate with work volume and market needs, adding that another study had been recommended to reclassify local transport companies in terms of their fleets, expertise, technical capabilities and percentage of their Kuwait ownership.

He said that under the forthcoming five-year plan, the administration would undertake

a survey of northern areas in territorial water, to study the sediments, purify and remove existing obstacles in the sea and improve the facilities of the old Failaka port and dredge it.

He said that the administration was the agency responsible for monitoring Kuwaiti coasts against major pollutants from passing ships, and oil tankers, adding that investigations into such incidents were carried out by staff officers.

ARAB TIMES

Thought for today

LOVE is like measles — all the worse when it comes late in life — Douglas Jerrold, English writer (1803-1857).

Style is simplicity

Havel woos world heads

LONDON, (AP): He mumbles, pulls at his tie, looks uncomfortable when mobbed by celebrities and knows little about protocol. This, plus a simple moral message, is what endears Vaclav Havel to a world weary of made-to-measure politicians.

When he made his first presidential journey abroad, to East Germany, aides to the Czechoslovak president had to scramble to get him his passport. It had been confiscated by the ousted communist bosses.

Now, three months after his fairy-tale ascent from prisoner to president, Havel has visited 10 countries. This week it was France and Britain. As usual, he was watched with adoration.

Havel is using his position as a platform to expound a political philosophy developed over 20 years of writing.

His voice is gravelly from years of chain-smoking and he sometimes mumbles or bumps into the microphone. But his words are clear, simple and direct.

"Totalitarianism deforms the human soul. People in Czechoslovakia are constantly asking me about ways to implement the new freedom. And I tell them, implement it in any way you wish."

He is one of a kind, an artist-statesman and the darling of the intelligentsia: Kurt Vonnegut, Zubin Mehta, Paul Simon, Edward Albee in New York; in Paris, an all-star cast led by actor Alain Delon; Tom Stoppard, Harold Pinter and Jeremy Irons among the guests at a reception given by the Royal Shakespeare Company in London.

"In the United States we encountered almost embarrassing adulation," said Havel's spokesman Michael Zantovsky. "They treated him as if he were some kind of modern prophet, and he is not particularly eager to become one."

Instead he is modest, shy, prone to blush. He deflects attention with humour and irony. He stands behind tables and against walls, away from the centre of the room. At one point he even managed somehow to hunch his short frame under a loudspeaker.

Except for the suit and tie, there is little to distinguish Havel the harassed dissident from Havel the state president.

Reception

"The reception he gets is something we have been absolutely unprepared for," Zantovsky said. "It really is too much of a good thing."

At the London reception Thursday night, in his own milieu of theatre and art, Havel looked relaxed.

With a cut-crystal glass of white wine and a cigarette in one hand, gesticulating with the other, he chatted with men in pinstripes and women in men's suits.

Havel clearly enjoys the drama of his situation and the theatricality of the presidency. The new uniforms he picked to replace the drab khaki of communism on the palace honour guard, for example, were created by the costume designer for Milos Forman's film, "Amadeus."

But Havel's performance abroad is unrehearsed and in provocation is not without pitfalls.

Conference

At his Paris news conference he kept tugging at his tie as if it were a noose around a neck more accustomed to open-necked shirts.

A British TV commentary described him as "refreshingly naive." After shaking hands with Prince Philip on the state steps of Buckingham Palace, he wiped his sweaty palm on his pants, apparently unaware that the nation would see it on TV.

But if there were rough edges, they were always softened by Havel's polished and thoughtful words. Like all the speeches he has given over the last three months, they were a logical extension of the limpid essays he has written for 20 years.

Introducing him to an audience of intellectuals on Wednesday, political commentator Timothy Garton-Ash called him "an exceptional example of what I might call moral leadership through language."

From a moral base built on years of fighting tyranny, Havel preaches political morality at a time when old political blocs and policies are crumbling. His watchwords are "living in truth," preserving the sanctity of words, revering freedom.

He insists he will serve as president only until Czechoslovakia has free elections, and these are scheduled for June. But already his impact looks permanent.

His words, said Ash, have become "letters to the world." Or, as the Times of London put it, "Havel is an idea whose man has come."

TODAY IN HISTORY

- 1495 — Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian appeals to German princes at Diet of Worms to check progress of French in Italy.
- 1793 — Holy Roman Empire declares war on France; French royalists revolt in La Vendée.
- 1820 — Individual liberties are curtailed in France.
- 1854 — Charles III, Duke of Parma, is murdered.
- 1895 — Japan occupies Pescadore Islands in Formosa Strait.
- 1913 — More than 1,400 people perish in floods in US states of Ohio, Indiana and Texas.
- 1926 — Romania and Poland form an alliance.
- 1931 — Treaty of friendship is signed between Iraq and Transjordan.
- 1953 — US Dr Jonas E. Salk announced new vaccine to immunize against polio.
- 1970 — Foreign ministers of Islamic countries decide at Jordan meeting to establish permanent secretariat.
- 1971 — Pakistan is reported on verge of civil war as president Yahya Khan outlaws rebellious Awami League.
- 1975 — South Vietnamese government announces arrest of several people for plotting to overthrow president Nguyen van Thieu.
- 1986 — Libyan radio calls for Arab suicide squads to strike US embassies and other interests "wherever they may be."
- 1988 — Iran and Iraq battle for mastery over Kurdistan mountains, just east of Iraqi oilfields.
- 1989 — Muslim rebels bombard Jalalabad in Afghanistan with rockets and artillery shells.

Closest polls in Australian history

Hawke hangs on to power

SYDNEY, (Reuters): Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke appeared on Sunday to have performed a Houdini-style escape from defeat to clinch power after one of the closest elections in the country's history.

Early on Sunday morning both Hawke and opposition leader Andrew Peacock said they believed they would be in a position to form a government after six hours of vote-counting on Saturday had failed to anoint a new leader.

But after a few hours sleep Peacock agreed with Hawke that Labour, bidding for its fourth successive term, was favourite to continue its seven-year hold on power in the 148-seat House of Representatives (Lower House).

"I believe Labour will win government," Hawke, who will stay on as caretaker prime minister, said after counting in the cliff-hanger poll stopped on Sunday morning with six seats delicately balanced. "Regrettably it's a very uncertain situation," Peacock said. "There are three possibilities — a hung Parliament, a labour government or a coalition government. And it's probably in that order, frankly."

Labour believes it now definitely holds 71 seats but concedes both Labour and the Liberal-National Party coalition could end up with 73 seats, with the balance of power held by two independents.

Counting will resume on Monday but the definitive result may not be known until Thursday after postal votes and preferences, a linch-pin of the complicated voting system, are sorted out.

Labour held a 22-seat majority before the election. In 1961 the Liberal-National Party coalition led by Robert Menzies won a two-seat majority over Labour and survived two years before calling another election which it won by a wide margin.

Ted Mack has definitely won the seat of north Sydney from the Liberal sitting member John Spender to become the first independent to win a Lower House seat for 24 years.

Helen Caldicott, a former Labour candidate standing on an anti-nuclear platform, looks likely to cause one of the biggest shocks of the campaign by unseating Charles Blunt, the National Party leader in the New South Wales country seat of Richmond.

"If this balance of power situation occurs I certainly won't be wasting it and I will be trying to obtain what I consider fairly major benefits for the country," Mack said.

Blunt's likely demise highlights the collapse in the support for the Nationals, a country-based party which Liberal supporters believe has, for the second poll running, scuppered the opposition's chances of winning power.

The National Party, once synonymous with maverick former Queensland premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Peterson, has been discredited in that state by disclosures of widespread corruption.

Public rejection of the Nationals spilled over into New South Wales which allowed labour to balance, to some extent, huge losses in Victoria caused by allegations of financial mismanagement by that state's labour government.

Defeat for the Liberals will almost definitely spell the end of Peacock's career as many analysts believe Labour's standing among the 10.6 million voters has never been lower because of high interest rates following an 18-month credit squeeze and state government problems in Victoria and Western Australia.

Peacock, leader in the coalition's losing 1984 campaign, rarely troubled the government and voters remained unconvinced about his chances of making a good prime minister.

Environment Minister Graham Richardson called Labour's apparent success "a Houdini-like escape."

Many analysts say Hawke's hold over the electorate waned considerably during the campaign and believe, even if successful, the 60-year-old prime minister will make way for treasurer Paul Keating early in the three-year term of the incoming parliament.

But Hawke, who said during the campaign he intended to lead Labour into his fifth election, said on Sunday he would stay in charge.

He told reporters: "I must say I have a great sense of wonder about the way you people are trying to stitch legs on to a corpse that won't bear those legs. I repeat I'll be staying for three years."



Hawke hugs his wife Hazel after predictions he will win. (Reuters wirephoto)

Emotions remain strong

SYDNEY, (Reuters): Bob Hawke, a slim, silver-haired 60-year-old out of his element, remains Australia's favourite national politician.

Hawke has steadily stepped back from day-to-day domestic policy-making during his third term, concentrating on international affairs and trips the length and breadth of the country listening to the concerns of the Labour faithful.

Hawke now wears sleek suits instead of the open-necked shirts favoured when he was the country's most powerful trade unionist.

Mellowed

The son of a church minister, Hawke has mellowed in his seven years in office but strong emotions, which used to find their outlet in strong language and heavy drinking, remain near the surface.

Hawke wept during a remembrance service for those who died in the military crackdown on democracy protests in Beijing's Tiananmen Square last year.

Last September he was forced to apologise to a pensioner after losing his temper and calling the elderly man "a silly old bugger."

In March 1989 he admitted, with tears in his eyes, what Australians

had suspected for many years: he had cheated on his wife Hazel in his younger days.

"She understood that it (infidelity) was part of a pretty volatile, exuberant character, and she knew my love for her had never changed," Hawke told a television interviewer.

Born

Robert James Lee Hawke was born on Dec 9, 1929, in the South Australian village of Bordertown where his father was a congregational church minister.

An outstanding student, he won a scholarship to the University of Western Australia, gaining a law degree with honours and a bachelor of arts degree specialising in economics.

In 1952 he won a Rhodes scholarship to Oxford University, where he spent three years studying Australia's labour arbitration system.

While at Oxford he won a blue at cricket and a place in the Guinness Book of World Records for drinking two-and-a-half pints (nearly 1.5 litres) of beer in 12 seconds.

Returning from Oxford, he married Hazel Masters, an organist at his father's church, in 1956. They have a son and two daughters. Hawke spent six months as a trainee oil executive, did odd jobs as a

gardener, a builder's labourer and was an attention on a merry-go-round.

Joined

He joined the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), an umbrella organisation for unions, as a research preparator in 1958. His grasp of economics and debating flair made him a formidable opponent for employers.

Although rising to head the ACTU with the support of left-wing unions, Hawke remained independent and free to manoeuvre.

Almost single-handed Hawke carried the union movement with him in an often unpopular campaign which ended Australia's sporting contacts with South Africa.

Actu president from 1970, Hawke won a seat in Parliament in 1980. He set about changing his image as a touch, outspoken union boss and gave up drinking alcohol.

When Liberal prime minister Malcolm Fraser called an election in March 1983, Hawke ousted Bill Hayden as leader of the Labour Party and led it to victory.

He said in his late 50s that he felt fitter and fitter as he got older, saying "I might be able to sell the secret and give the funds to the party."

Runcie has had enough

LONDON, (Reuters): Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie came to office in 1980 as a determined conciliator, only to face more criticism than any of his modern predecessors.

Runcie, who announced his resignation on Sunday on the tenth anniversary of his appointment, was spiritual leader of the Church of England and of the world's 70 million Anglicans in a decade of bitter debate over the church's role in modern life.

An ardent proponent of Christian unity, he outraged vocal elements within his church who oppose closer ties with Roman Catholicism and estranged Britain's Conservative government with his stinging attacks on its policies during the 1980s.

The archbishop has tendered his resignation to Queen Elizabeth, titular head of the Church of England, and said he planned to step down in January next year. Runcie was obliged by church law to retire by his 70th birthday in October next year.

Critics accused Runcie of failing to provide strong leadership for the world's Anglicans, which look to the Church of England for spiritual guidance.

Runcie, a mildly-spoken man in the Anglican tradition of compromise, once answered the charges: "It would be comparatively easy to be a more authoritative leader. But it's much more difficult to be a leader in the way of Jesus."

Church reunification was at the top of Runcie's agenda during meetings with Pope John Paul II in September 1989. His advocacy of some kind of papal primacy in a joint church won little Vatican response but caused a storm of protest at home.

Traditionalists decry reunification as a betrayal of the reformation. Liberals dislike it as it runs against their aims on issues like women's ordination, divorce and birth control.

Runcie's attacks on the materialism of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's government marked a growing estrangement between her party and his church.

Conservatives denounced his failure to sound a triumphal note at a service after the 1982 Falklands war, and dismissed a 1983 church report on urban problems as "Marxist theology."

In January this year Runcie said the gap between rich and poor had widened to create a Dickensian "Tale of Two Cities" — one prospering, the other neglected — in Britain's urban areas.



Runcie... maverick head

China flouts world trends

BEIJING, (AP): Glasnost and perestroika may have cast their spell on the rest of the world, but at China's annual People's Congress the magic word is "wending" — stability.

The word has been repeated with liturgical monotony in speeches, discussions, and interviews at this year's National People's Congress, the Communist-Party dominated Parliament.

Premier Li Peng set the tone in his keynote address to the Congress Tuesday. "Now, as we confront pressure from abroad and difficulties at home, preservation of the country's stability is a matter of paramount importance."

Congress

Every citizen, he told the 2,700 deputies, "should cherish the hard-won political stability and unity as he would treasure his own life."

Song Ping, a Politburo standing committee member, told the lawmakers: "History has taught us that nothing can be achieved without a stable situation."

The spokesman for the Congress, Yao Guang, said political reforms would be ruled out if they "affect the stability of the situation."

The passion for stability reflects the insecurities of the Chinese leadership. They fear the disintegration of socialist values and institutions around the world.

They also fear the reform movement crushed by tanks last June will revive and students will return to the streets with their pro-democracy demands. They fear a populace made restless by poor working and living conditions. And they remember China's historical lessons that anarchy always brings suffering.

"Common people truly want to see the country stable. They have suffered enough from the turmoil and if the country is plagued with chaos, it is the common people who will suffer," said deputy Luo Yifeng, an engineer from Beijing. He was quoted by the official Xinhua news agency.

Upheld

His sentiments are shared by most Chinese who have a cultural aversion to the "privations" brought on by thousands of years of internal upheavals. Many have personally lived through the economic madness of Mao Tse-tung's 1958 great leap forward and the mass hysteria of the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution.

But the party is now preaching "stability" to further its own ends and the new buzzword, "wending," is greeted with cynicism by many Chinese as another way for the party to justify its rule and maintain tight control.

The party is demanding unquestioned acceptance of the status quo, with its ban on political opposition to one-party rule and obedience to an ageing, unpopular leadership.

Stability means forcing new market-oriented reforms and clamping more state controls over the economy.

"Stability takes precedence over everything," the Beijing Daily newspaper quoted deputy Tao Daying, a well-known economist, as saying.

Others fear the economy will not have the necessary environment to develop.

Stability also signifies the end of Mao's "revolution" and the end of the suppression of labour unrest, a byproduct of economic austerity measures that have led to plant closures and rising unemployment.

Stability

"Only with stability can the country preserve the results achieved through reforms in the past decade," trade union official and Shanghai deputy Wu Huijiang told Xinhua.

The official press has made certain that no social group is left out. It quoted Li Hong, a law student at Beijing University, as saying "almost every university student in China desires social and political stability."

Doge Cering, government chief in Tibet, told the Congress: "We Tibetans who have suffered enough from the turmoil of the Cultural Revolution and riots in recent years understand the importance of political and social stability."

Wu Yujian, a deputy representing the People's Liberation Army, noted: "Last year, some people talked a lot about new concepts and new thinking and they mocked those who talked Marxism and Leninism. Now things have changed, people believe in Marxism and Leninism again."

That's the message Premier Li hammered home in his concluding remark to the Congress.

"Foreign forces hostile to China that engage in subversive activities are bound to fail," Li said. "Come what may, socialist China will stand rock firm in the East."

Letters to the editor

Bihar state

SIR: Bihar is the second biggest state of Indian territory by means of area and population, but it goes under the label of the "poorest state of India".

It has no political controversies like other states. The history of Bihar is proof of honesty, hospitality, which of course after partition (independence) was combined with some other states like Orissa and separated later on (after few years) fulfilling each others integration. On the other side bordering UP, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar, and Assam, Bihar was also solved by solution. Differences never occurred to cause confusion with the states bordering it.

West Bengal, one of India's industrial and densely populated states has always been co-operative and coordinated with Bihar in all means, "because of their industrial needs." Although the raw materials are supplied from neighbouring states, especially Assam, jute, coal and other existing mineral ores.

Furthermore, the famous iron steel mine Jamshedpur, coal mine Dhanbad Bokaro, Durgam, and Panna Singhbhum, Hazaribagh, Jharia, Giridih, etc. all are the products of Bihar. Jute (hemp), rice, wheat, sugarcane, tobacco, mangoes, litchi, banana (India's famous Hapus banana) and other foodstuffs, cereals and pulses are grown in different districts like Darrang, Munger, Patna, Saharsa, Purnea, Gaya, Chapra, etc.

In spite of all these natural resources and richness this state is labelled "the poorest state of India," isn't it a worrying situation?

The solution lies with the politicians and foreign lobbies. There is not a single major industry except Jamshedpur Tata (vehicles) and once India's only oil refinery near Patna. There is poverty because of the political mafia, rattling bureaucracy and deep-rooted religious casteism.

Hence, unity and honesty is the best policy to regenerate a new path and nation.

M. Quasim Alam,
Sahar.

BANGLADESH NATIONAL DAY

AN ARAB TIMES SUPPLEMENT

President's message

Securing a better future

ON the auspicious occasion of the 19th anniversary of our Independence and National Day, I extend to all my countrymen at home and abroad my warmest greetings and warm felicitations.

On this day we pay homage to the valiant martyrs of our glorious war of independence who laid down their precious lives for the cause of our national liberation. We also reaffirm our solemn pledge to realise their vision of a strong and prosperous Bangladesh.

The celebration of this auspicious day manifests our unrelenting resolve to consolidate our hard-earned political independence with greater economic prosperity and public well-being. Our fundamental objective remains the establishment of an exploitation-free, prosperous, just and democratic society.

We have already made significant progress during the last eight years towards these ends. Democracy has been firmly established even at the grass-root level with the creation of Zila and

Upazila Parishads. Despite severe constraints and the disastrous impact of recurring natural disasters, significant advances have been made in all sectors of our national economy. Self-sufficiency in food is no longer a bare dream. The current growth trend indicates that we may achieve this target by 1992.

Significant advances have been achieved in the industrial sector as well following the introduction of a new Industrial Policy and the establishment of a Board of Investment, geared to attract foreign investment. Control on the public sector has been relaxed and the private sector given adequate encouragement to play a greater role in the industrialisation of the country.

The process of poverty alleviation has been reinforced with such pragmatic measures as the establishment of cluster villages for the landless, the creation of a Debt Settlement Board and the introduction of further incentives to small and marginal farmers.

Meanwhile, the international community has reinforced our

massive national efforts to revitalise our economy and to institute short-term flood prevention measures by adopting a co-ordinated International Plan of Action for flood-control and disaster-management in our country.

We are going to launch the Fourth Five-Year Plan in July this year, as part of a 20-Year Perspective Plan aimed at making a break-through to self-sustained development. It concentrates on the three critical aspects of development — poverty alleviation, increased self-reliance and gradual employment generation. A major thrust of the Plan is to draw into the mainstream of development the poorest groups of the society who are currently either outside or on the peripheries of the development process.

Internationally, Bangladesh now enjoys a position of greater prestige and respect in the company of nations. Our active contribution and consistent efforts to promote peace, stability, justice and development at home and

abroad through friendly co-operation and constructive dialogue with all nations are widely appreciated. In our own region, we have striven to further the objectives of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation, Saarc, as an essential harmonising force not only to improve living standards of all peoples but to lessen tension and remove all irritants in bilateral relations. Our citizen abroad remain our goodwill ambassadors at large to brighten the image of our country with a patriotic zeal and vital contributions to socio-economic development.

I have firm faith that our unwavering perseverance in the pursuit of our national goals will, insbhallah, enable us to build a strong, self-reliant and prosperous Bangladesh and secure a better future for us all.

I wish each of my dear countrymen greater happiness and prosperity in the days ahead.

Khuda Hafez,
Hussain Muhammad Ershad
Bangladesh President



President Hussain Muhammad Ershad

Planning

New strategy for overall growth

By Dr Sheikh Maqsood Ali

(The writer is a member of the Planning Commission of the Government of Bangladesh.)

DEVELOPMENT practitioners, economists and social scientists in Bangladesh are giving final touches to the Fourth Five-Year Plan. For almost two years officials in the Planning Commission have been working on the plan which will be formally launched on July 1 and its period of implementation will extend to mid 1995.

The Fourth Five-Year Plan is part of the 20-year perspective plan which is to take the country beyond the twenty-first century. The plan which comes in the last decade of the outgoing century prepares the country for the new era. It, therefore, plays a crucial role in development strategy.

There has been a change in planning strategy in the new development plan. Instead of basing the strategy on the growth of different sectors of the economy, progress will be measured on the economic and social development of the various social and income groups in the country. The population of Bangladesh, now almost 110 million, have been stratified into ten groups. They range from landless agricultural labour and small farmers owning less than 1.5 acres to urban formal group owning households and engaged in the non-agricultural sector. The goal for such a change in strategy is to directly involve the different economic groups in the country in the development process.

The landless and the small farmers in the rural areas and the

urban poor constitute about 50 per cent of the population.

There is need for special projects to help these groups to overcome their poverty and achieve self-reliance. It has been found that the poor can move towards self-reliance if they are supervised credit schemes. They have been seen to increase their savings and investments through the use of resources with prudence. But they require an institutional support with the help of which credit can be provided and supervised.

The group based planning gives the possibilities of organising such a structure for helping the disadvantaged people. Participatory planning at the micro-level provided by the decentralised administration through 460 "upazilas" (sub-districts) helps in the framing of a development strategy based on population groups.

In the decentralised system local people are able to identify their own development problems and fix their priorities. They develop their own projects based on their needs. It is obvious that those projects will put accent on fisheries, poultry, livestock and forestry development. To aid this bottom up planning process, "Kishori Palsabals" or farmers' schools, health clinics and banking facilities for the landless are being set up.

The "upazilas" are divided into different unions and those smallest rural local organisations are also engaged in their own planning.

Fulfilling a pledge

enjoys unprecedented peace and stability. Our position in the company of nations is one of respect and admiration. The success of the forward looking policies of the government has found manifestation in the rapid development of our economy and the prestigious image that our country enjoys abroad.

We must be relentless in our quest to build up a happy and prosperous Bangladesh. The nation will fail to accord true

recognition to the supreme sacrifices of the Shaheeds if we fail to fulfil their dreams.

Since independence, we were confronted with many formidable challenges. Perhaps the most severe was the disastrous floods in 1988 which claimed so many valuable lives and caused devastation to property. During those days of national calamity, the spontaneous solidarity of the people of Bangladesh was similar to what we had seen in 1971. The

entire nation unitedly faced the crisis with the patience, courage and fortitude. The whole world stood in admiration at this rare instance of national solidarity which could only be demonstrated by the patriotic people of a courageous and freedom loving nation.

The dynamic leadership of President Hussain Muhammad Ershad has given the nation the right sense of direction to surge forward. The entire efforts of the

government and people are dedicated to national development. National efforts have been encouraged by the generous assistance received from friendly countries. The international community has responded most favourably to President Ershad's commitment to implement long term measures for flood control. The investment climate in the country today is more congenial and favourable than ever before. We have created ideal conditions for joint ventures both in the public and private sectors. Education for all is a priority agenda for the government and

(Continued on Page 12)



Foreign Minister Anisul Islam

ON the occasion of the nineteenth anniversary of the independence of Bangladesh, I extend my warmest congratulations and greetings to all fellow Bangladeshis both at home and abroad.

On this great day, we recall with deep gratitude the gallant sons of our soil and the valiant freedom fighters who laid down their lives for the independence of our country. We pray to Almighty Allah for the salvation of their souls and for their heavenly peace.

During the past nineteen years, Bangladesh has come a long way. Today, the country

Dynamic efforts for overall improvement

ON this joyous occasion of the 19th anniversary of our Independence and National Day, I extend to all Bangladeshis in Kuwait my warmest greetings and felicitations. On this great occasion, I join them all to pray to Almighty Allah for the salvation of the souls of those immortal martyrs who laid down their lives for sovereign and independent Bangladesh.

Those great martyrs of our war of independence dreamt of a happy and prosperous Bangladesh wherein an exploitation-free democratic society would flourish. Under the dynamic and enlightened leadership of President Hussain Muhammad Ershad, all efforts are being made to realise the dream of our martyrs.

The innumerable development and people-oriented measures that have been taken by the government have been transforming the life of our people into a life of usefulness and purpose. Measures like distribution of lands among the landless, establishment of a Debt Settlement Board, and cluster villages, introduction of

rural rationing, generation of employment by setting up of small and cottage industries throughout the country, have directly contributed to the process of poverty alleviation. The decentralisation of administration and judiciary has not only provided an opportunity for local participation in administration and decision-making but also reactivated the economic life of the people. Continuity of democratic process through popular elections, family planning and population control measures, mass literacy programme, establishment of Pathshala Trust for the welfare of destitute and under-privileged children, introduction of compulsory primary education for children, are but pledges for an improved quality of life for our people.

Despite frequent natural disasters and resultant financial constraints, remarkable progress has been made in every sector of our economy. Last year we had a bumper harvest, as there was no flood. A succession of good harvests, supplemented by

infrastructural improvements in the agricultural sector, is expected to help Bangladesh realise her dream of food-autarky in near future. The international community has responded most favourably to Hon'ble President's call for flood control in Bangladesh. A co-ordinated International Plan of Action for flood-control and disaster-management in our country has been adopted and an initial amount of \$150 million has been pledged for establishment of some projects.

The present government under the leadership of President Hussain Muhammad Ershad is taking all steps to create a most favourable investment climate in the country. Over the last few years several mills and factories have been denationalised. This has also encouraged establishment of new private sector industries in the country. The formation of a Board of Investment has facilitated secure and lucrative foreign investments on easy and attractive terms.



K.M. Sheha buddin

The government has also been successful in promoting export of traditional and non-traditional goods. The international market for Bangladesh's jute and jute-products, leather and leather products, garments, tea, fish, vegetables, handicrafts are expanding because of their quality and competitive prices.

(Continued on Page 14)

Grameen Bank Banking on the poor

THE popular belief that the poor people are not bankable, that they cannot find a way to earn a living through agriculture, that they cannot save, that they run out of ideas, that the rural power structure will ensure that the bank fails and that women in particular will not be able to borrow and that the banking without collateral is not possible have all proved to be mere myths — asserts Dr Muhammad Yunus, the founder of Grameen Bank (GB) and currently its managing director. He maintains that the Grameen Bank's continued success, in spite of apprehensions, have exploded many myths about the poor.

The origin of Grameen Bank can be traced back about 13 years from now when Dr Yunus, professor of economics, Chittagong University launched an action research programme to examine the possibilities and design a comprehensive banking framework to bring the rural poor within a viable banking network. He was convinced that the traditional banks were structured in such a way that they would never help the poor who constitute the largest segment of the society and the ones who are desperately in need of credit. He identified the following:

- the conventional banks basic designs was wrong. In order to borrow money from a bank, one has to have collateral;
- most of the extremely poor in Bangladesh do not have possession or land that they can use as collateral for borrowing;
- most Bangladeshi banks discriminated against women. Any

women wanting a loan had to get her husband to co-sign it;

The banking system required literacy: "When you apply for a loan, they make you fill out an application," Dr Yunus said. "Could you imagine a grocer or a butcher requiring his customers to take a literacy test before he did business with them? Well, this is the situation we have with the banks. They have created the myth that you need reading and writing to borrow money."

Thus Dr Yunus reasoned that if financial resources can be made available to the poor landless people at terms and conditions which are appropriate and reasonable "these million of small people with their million of small pursuits can add up to create the biggest development wonder."

The action research project, which he called the "Grameen Bank Project" (grameen means rural) came into being with the following objectives in mind: to extend banking facilities to the poor men and women, to eliminate the exploitation of money lenders, to create opportunities for self-employment for the vast unutilised and under-utilised manpower resources, to bring the disadvantaged people within the fold of some organisational format which they can understand and operate and can find socio-political and economic strength in mutual support, to reverse the age-old vicious circle

of "low income, low savings, low investments" into an expanding system of "low income, credit, investment, more income, more credit, more investment, more income."

Strength

The project demonstrated its strength in the village jobra (a village adjacent to the Chittagong University — the initial site of the action research project) and some of the neighbouring villages during 1976-79. From there, with the sponsorship of Bangladesh Bank (central bank of the country) and support of all nationalised commercial banks and the Bangladesh Krishi (Agricultural) Bank (BKRB) it was extended to Tangail (a district near Dhaka) in 1979.

With the success in Tangail the project was extended to several other districts viz. Chittagong, Dhaka, Rangpur and Patuakhali.

In October 1983, the Grameen Bank Project was transformed into an independent bank by a government ordinance with the name "Grameen Bank." The government provides 25 per cent of the paid up share capital of the bank while 75 per cent is held by the borrowers of the bank.

Loans are lent to men and women who must form themselves into groups of five in order to receive loans for which no collateral is required. The group members should be like minded

and have similar economic and social background. Any person whose family owns less than 0.5 acre of cultivable land and the value of all family assets together does not exceed the market value of one acre of medium quality land in the area, is eligible to take loans from the bank for any income generating activity.

Before loans are given to the eligible borrowers they have to undergo an intensive training of one to two weeks and pass a test philosophy of Grameen Bank and its rules and procedures.

Branches

Grameen Bank has nine zonal offices. Between the zonal office and the branch there is the area office. An area office looks after 10 to 15 branches.

By the end of November 1989, the Grameen Bank had 638 branches serving 648,267 borrowers of whom 89 per cent were women. It had disbursed, by November 1989 about taka 5,154.28 million (\$156.19 million). Its recovery rate is close to 98 per cent. Group members saved more than taka 427.30 million (\$12.95 million) up to November 1989. Grameen Bank operation has reached 14,737 villages in 39 districts. It hopes to set up a total of 1000 branches by the end of 1992.

Grameen Bank members have taken loans for more than 500 different types of activities. Average loan size is about taka 2,000 (\$60) only.



স্বাধীনতা দিবসের শুভেচ্ছা
দি জিটি ইন্টারন্যাশনাল এক্সচেঞ্জ কো.লিঃ

Our felicitations on the Independence
and National Day of
Bangladesh

- জাতি ও টেলিগ্রাম এর মাধ্যমে অতি অল্প সময়ে সরাসরি জাতি ও টেলিগ্রাম পাঠানোর ব্যবস্থা।
- আল-বাহাজা ব্যাংক এর সকল শাখায় সরাসরি টাকা প্রদানের ব্যবস্থা।
- বাংলাদেশের বৃহত্তম ব্যাংক, মোনাবী ব্যাংক এর মনোনীত সকল শাখায় সরাসরি টাকা/ড্রাকট প্রদানের নিশ্চয়তা।
- বাংলাদেশের যে কোন ব্যাংক-এর যে কোন শাখায় সরাসরি টাকা জমা করানোর সুব্যবস্থা।
- ফিলিপাইন, শ্রীলঙ্কা ও পাকিস্তানে রেমিটেন্স প্রেরণের ব্যবস্থা।
- বিশ্বের প্রধান শহরগুলোতে বিনিময়যোগ্য যে কোন কারেন্সিতে কিংবা ঐ দেশের মুদ্রায় রেমিটেন্স পাঠানোর ব্যবস্থা।
- সর্বোপরি কুলনামুকভাবে আকর্ষণীয় বিনিময় হার (EXCHANGE RATE) প্রদানের ব্যবস্থা।



شركة المدينة للصيرفة الدولية ذ.م.م.
The City International Exchange Co. W.L.L.

Head Office and Main Branch
Al-Hilal Street, Murgab
P.O. Box 21804 Safat 13079 Kuwait
Tel. 2448507 - 2441845/6 Telex: 44167 CTXEX KT.
Fax: 965-2407371

Fahahel Branch:
Al-Dabos Building, Mecca Street
P.O. Box 7823, Fahahel 64009 Kuwait
Tel. 3910097 - 3928115

হাফেজের চেম্বার 'আমরা শনিবার হইতে বৃহস্পতিবার প্রতিদিন সকাল ৮-১০ হইতে ১২-৩০
এক বিবেক হটা হইতে রাত ৮টা ও শুক্রবার বিবেক ৩টা হইতে রাত ৮টা পর্যন্ত মিয়াকিত্তি থাকি।

Land reforms

Changing quality of life

THE Government of Bangladesh has instituted a number of substantive and fundamental reforms in various spheres of the national economy in a bid to change the quality of life of the people.

Like many developing countries, the problem and history of land reforms in Bangladesh is an old one—spread over centuries. Feudalism in its worst form took its deepest roots under the British colonial rule in this part of the sub-continent. Land laws in Bangladesh closely followed the political developments in this part of the sub-continent now included in Bangladesh. With the lapse of the British rule in India in 1947, two independent states—India and Pakistan—came into being. Subsequently, the eastern part of Pakistan emerged as the People's Republic of Bangladesh on December 16, 1971 in the wake of a nine-month long war of independence.

Land has been the most important resource historically for the agrarian economy of Bangladesh. The government realised and appreciated the vital significance of land reforms in effectively utilising this great resource. Accordingly, in recent times epoch-making land-reforms laws, measures and activities have been put into operation. The nature of these steps need to be understood to appreciate the role of land reforms in development of the agriculture and economy of Bangladesh.

Problems

The country comprises flat, fertile alluvial soil of the Ganges-Brahmaputra delta which has been able to sustain a large and fast increasing population in a small area. It is a country with one of the highest density in population in the world—110 million in an area of 144,000 square kilometres giving a population of 710 per square kilometre.

The presence of population growth (the rate being 2.20 per annum) is alarming which the Government of President Hussain Muhammad Ershad is trying its best to check. The country is basically rural and agricultural. The rural population consists

of 85 per cent of the total population (as per estimates of 1981). About 80 per cent of the people depend on agriculture for their livelihood.

The total farm area comprises about 62 per cent of the total geographical area; forests account for 15 per cent. Perennial water 11 per cent and urban area only one per cent. The physical landscape is characterised by small, fragmented arable fields.

There are over 10.04 million farm holdings with 59.85 million fragments. The pattern of land ownership is highly skewed. Only 5 per cent of the families (having land above 7.5 acres) own 26 per cent of the land and 70 per cent families (having land above 2.5 acres) own 29 per cent of the land.

Statistics show that 54 per cent of the net cropped area (22.5 million acres) is single-cropped and area under double and triple crops account for 38 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively. Irrigation facilities covers only one-fifth of the net cropped area. The mode of cultivation is traditional and the per acre yields are low (rice 0.703 metric tons per acre). As a result, the country is facing a more or less static food deficit ranging between 1.5 and two million metric tons annually.

Employment opportunities have not expanded significantly outside the agricultural sector. So the growing population continues to be tied to the land in the absence of adequate access to non-agricultural employment opportunities in the urban areas, in industries, commerce or rural growth centres. About 57 per cent of the rural families are functionally landless and their numbers are increasing. As a result, poverty and unemployment situation is aggravating in a manner adverse to the rural poor and their access to the land.

A complex web of economic, social and cultural factors contribute towards and accentuate the problems of landlessness. The reasons for accentuating the landlessness are population growth, damage through flood, cyclone, drought or pests, loss of livestock, famine, epidemic, litigation and the like.

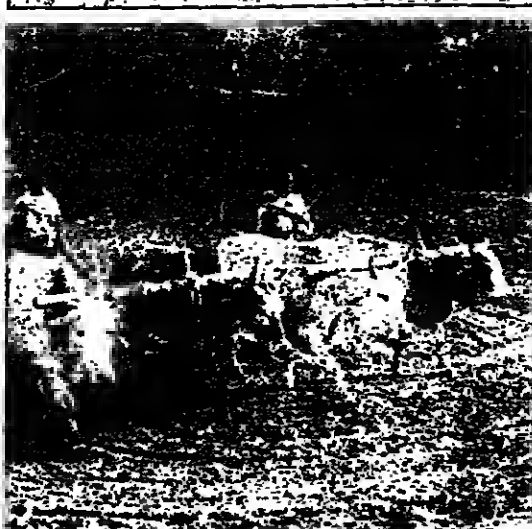
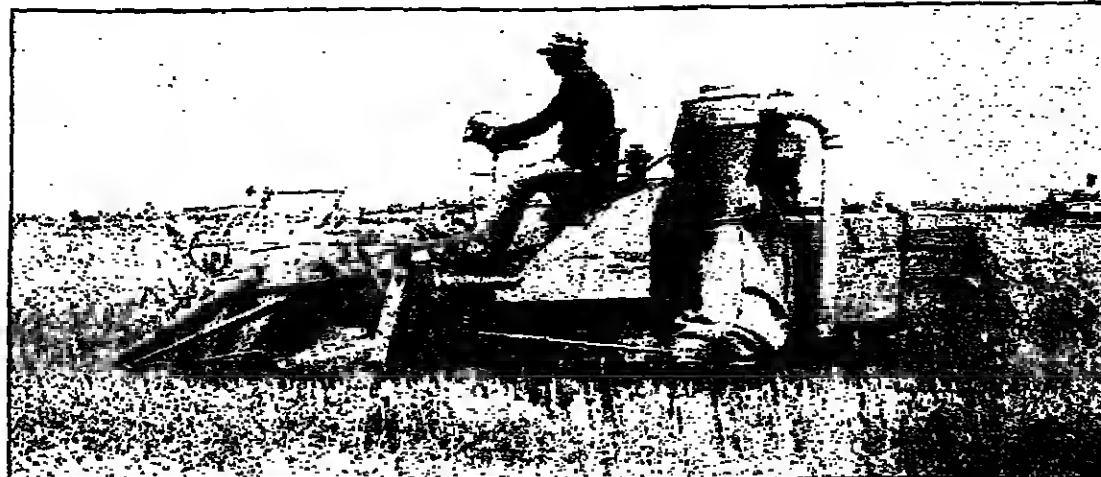
The government is determined to carry out its policy of modernisation of land management to make it rational, effective and efficient. As a part of structural reforms, the Ministry of Land has taken up the amendment and modifications of existing laws and rules. The updating of various instructions, orders and manuals (like Land Management Manual, Land Acquisition Manual, Survey and Settlement Manual) relating to land affairs have also been taken up.

"New laws where necessary are being introduced, so that the entire force of laws, rules and manuals are directed towards helping speedy implementation of land reforms for development, the committed goal of the government," says a document of the Ministry of Land.

Meantime, the campaign and the programmes for land reforms have started yielding results. The programmes for land distribution and establishment of clustered villages have met with tremendous initial success and have raised the hopes of the poorest and helplessness about changing their quality of life in foreseeable future.

President Ershad's Land Reforms campaign, launched in early 1987, is featured by the following: (a) A national programme of distribution of government lands among the landless farmers; (b) "Operation Thikana": rehabilitation of rural homeless families through establishment of clustered villages on government lands; and (c) Agricultural debt settlement through local conciliation boards. This is directed towards reduction in the rate of landlessness of marginal farmers.

Other objectives of the campaign were: providing legal rights to the share-croppers, ensuring optimum utilisation of hilly lands, fisheries, shrimp lands and the like for increased production, helping achieve higher agricultural productivity and greater equity in the distribution of rural income, reducing rural urban migration and establishing integrated Land Management System for effective implementation of Land



Reforms laws and policy. As for distribution of government land, President Ershad's government has already issued a policy directive for distribution of agricultural lands—the number of which is estimated to be around 7,20,800 acres scattered

throughout the country in a planned manner to the landless and marginal farmers (under the Operation Thikana Programme). The basic idea is to provide a maximum of two acres of government land to genuine landless and near landless farmers in rural areas and provide them with minimum cash and credit assistance to enable them to start farming or other economic activity. Up to October 30, 1989, nearly 167,867 landless farmers have been allotted 168,431 acres of government land.

Fulfilling a pledge

(Continued from Page 11)

positive steps have been taken toward eradicating illiteracy from the country. Cluster villages are being established in close succession to provide homesteads to the landless free of cost. The Debt Settlement Board is also committed to free the poor from the burden of debt. The problem of over-population which is one of our main hurdles to progress is also being addressed as a national priority.

The prestige and esteem that our country enjoys today in international relations bears testimony to the success of our

foreign policy. Effective pursuit and implementation of the foreign policy has helped us to contribute positively in international political and economic relations. Today, the whole world is caught up in phenomenal changes by which barriers between blocs are being removed and are bringing nations closer to each other. Bangladesh, which is committed to preservation of international peace and security, will continue to contribute positively to this process.

The country is particularly appreciative of the role of overseas Bangladeshis in the national

development activities. Their remittances are one of the major sources of foreign exchange earnings for the country. I am sure that participation of our citizens living abroad in national development will be further activated by their generous investment in the country.

On this day let us renew our resolve to dedicate ourselves totally to the development of our country. Inshallah, with hard work, our success is inevitable.

Khruda Hafez,
Bangladesh Zindabad,
Message of Foreign Minister,
Anisul Islam Mahmud.

Investment

Encouraging the private industry

A.K.M. Mosharraf Hossain
Secretary, Ministry of Industries

THE industrial policy of Bangladesh has undergone, several changes since independence in 1971. During the initial days there was little scope for the private entrepreneurs. The policy changed gradually and now emphasis is on the private sector. The ceiling on private investment was done away with in 1978. A law was passed in 1980 to promote and protect foreign investment. Simultaneously, the process of disinvestment of state-owned enterprises was also started and the stock-market reactivated.

The new industrial policy (NIP) put into operation in 1982 brought about many substantial changes giving emphasis on private enterprises. The government further liberalized the industrial policy in 1986 aiming at effective participation of the people, attaching greater importance on the private sector investment including foreign private investment. According to this policy, the role of the government is to provide support and assistance to the private sector in industrial development with lesser official interference. It simplified sanctioning and licensing procedure with comprehensive incentive package.

The policy has reserved only the following seven sectors for public sector investment: arms and ammunition; defence equipment; generation (excluding stand-by/captive generation) transmission and distribution of electricity; forest plantation and mechanised extraction within the bounds of reserved forests; telecommunications (excluding distribution and services); air transport (excluding cargo) and railways; atomic energy and security printing (currency note) and minting.

The policy stipulates that all other sectors will be meant for the private sector. However, in areas and/or sectors where investment is considered desirable, but private investment may set up industries, either exclusively or jointly with the private/not be forthcoming public sector (which may include some sectors transferred to the private entrepreneurs.

Since 1986 industrial policy has gone through further major reforms. The policy is now totally liberalised and simplified and government is playing the role of promoter of industry. To provide a package service under one roof, government established the board of investment (BOI) a high powered body headed by the president of the country with an executive council for day to day operation. The BOI has been operational since the first January, 1989. Along with reforms in industrial policy, government has also carried out major reforms in trade policy. Import policy has been liberalised and taxation policy rationalised to create congenial atmosphere for investment.

Some of the main features of present industrial policy, are given below:

● No prior approval is required for local investment from per-

sonal resources or with private bank financing provided industry is not in the "discouraged list".

● No prior approval for establishing an industry with foreign investment is required if:

(a) the total project cost does not exceed TK.100 million (\$3.3 million approximately);

(b) the foreign equity does not exceed 49 per cent; and

(c) the proposed industry does not fall within the purview of the "discouraged list".

The joint venture projects not falling under the above-mentioned category require approval of the BOI. In all other cases the industry is to be registered with the BOI. There is no fixed ratio of equity between local and foreign investments. Foreign equity to the extent of 100 per cent is allowed.

Foreign Private Investment (Promotion & Protection) Act, 1980 ensures legal protection to foreign investment in Bangladesh against expropriation and nationalisation guaranteeing equal treatment.

Foreign investors are also given the facility of repatriation of capital invested, including capital gains, a tax holiday for 3 years for developed areas, 7 years for less developed areas, 9 years for least developed areas and 12 years for the special economic zones; 5 per cent import duty on capital machinery for industries in developed areas; 7.5 per cent for less developed areas and 2.5 per cent for least developed areas and other incentives like tariff protection up to 4 years to the deserving industries and suppliers, credit permissible under approved terms.

Additional incentives to exporters include loan up to 90 per cent value of letter of credit from commercial banks for export oriented industries, lower interest rate (presently 90 per cent) on pre-shipment and packing credit and income tax rebate up to 60 per cent on export of non-traditional items.

In conclusion, it may be mentioned that at its present stage of economic development, Bangladesh welcomes foreign capital to accelerate the pace of industrial growth. Bangladesh has established an economic and political atmosphere for foreign investment with necessary legal protection, administrative incentive package. Our developed infrastructure and abundance of adaptable work-force combined with technology and capital from abroad will permit production at low-cost. The country with a population of 110 million has a vast expanding market. A number of multinational companies have been operating in Bangladesh government's liberal industrial policies, recently many foreign entrepreneurs are showing keen interest for investment in Bangladesh. It is hoped that the foreign investors will explore the possibilities of investment in Bangladesh and contribute to its further industrial development.

Significant impact on socio-economic development

Harnessing technology for growth

By A.N.M. Eusuf

(THE writer is secretary of the Science and Technology Division of the government of Bangladesh)

Bangladesh has been striving hard to meet the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, health, education and the like for its people, to substantially raise the living standard throughout the country. To achieve these goals Bangladesh has taken a planned approach to harnessing the potentials of science and technology.

The government formulated a

national science and technology policy in 1986 to organise and co-ordinate all research and development work concerning science and technology with careful selection of the problems facing the country in each vital sector, where solutions are likely to have a significant impact on the economic and socio-cultural development of the country.

Ten sectors for special efforts were identified. These are agriculture, land, livestock, poultry, forestry, fisheries, flood control, water resources, land reclamation, deltaic studies, health, family planning, energy;

large scale industries including engineering and metal industries, small scale and rural industries; transportation; small scale and rural industries; transportation; communications; housing and public works, scientific and technological education.

For ensuring that policy formulation in science and technology and their application in various sectors, proceed in a co-ordinated manner, a national committee on science and technology was constituted in 1983. It was later reconstituted and elevated to the status of a national council in 1987. The

NCST is headed by the President and includes the Vice-President (Vice-Chairman), minister of agriculture, religious affairs, works, education and science and technology, four members of parliament and a number of secretaries of ministries, vice-chancellors and eminent scientists. The Science & Technology Division serves as the secretariat of this council. It has an executive committee headed by the Vice-President.

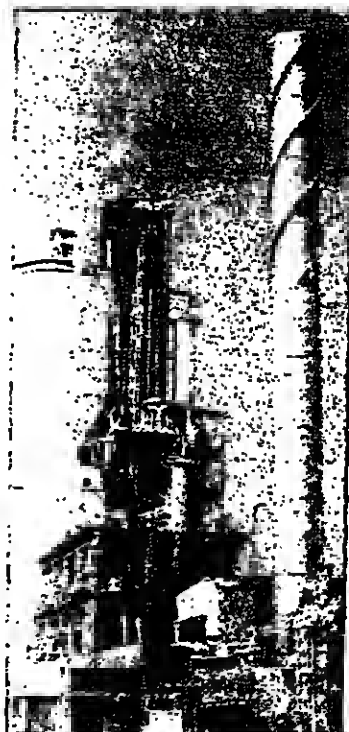
The most important committee with operational responsibility is the consultative committee for transfer of technology headed by the education minister. It is charged with the identification of technological needs and capabilities and formulation of an appropriate technology plan.

Realising the critical role technology can play in socio-economic development, the government has accepted technology as an important critical variable. It has already been decided that the Fourth Five Year Plan (FFYP) which will be launched in July next will also incorporate a technology plan along with traditional economic plan. In the

productive sector (particularly industries) no amount of economic planning will do without supporting technology planning. During the FFYP, integration of technological considerations in national planning will receive high priority.

Technology based development needs an institutional arrangement for absorption, adaptation and improvement of imported technology as also innovations for trade. What this arrangement should be, will need very careful consideration.

For realising the untapped potential of science and technology the national council of science and technology and the consultative committee on transfer of technology have recently taken a number of important decisions. These include setting up a national centre for Technology Development and Transfer formulation of a Technology Plan; assessment of technological needs and capabilities; formation of a committee for review of technological needs and capabilities; and the creation of a permanent co-ordination cell in Science and Technology Division.



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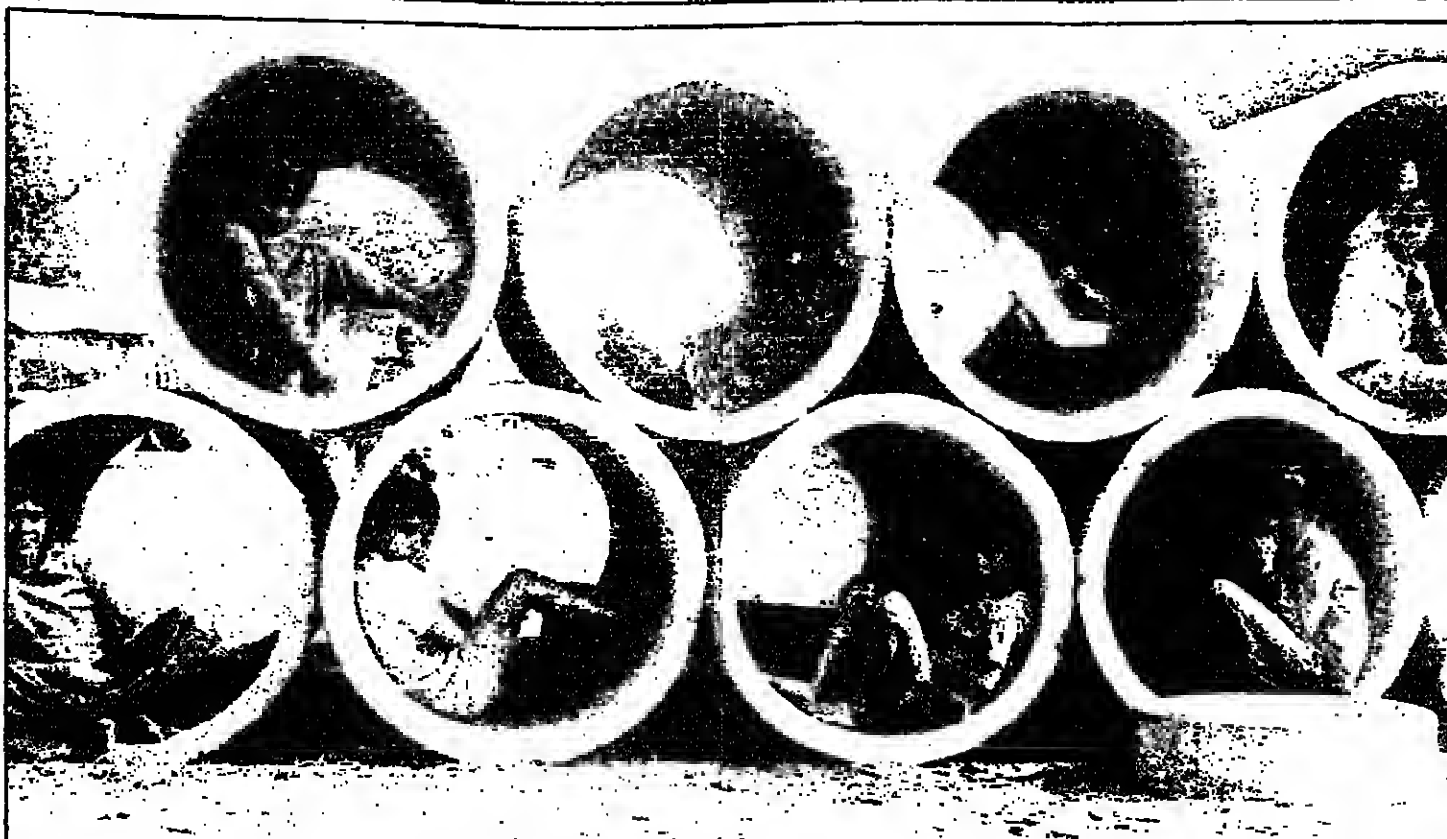
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TILL the 'sixties' agriculture used to provide employment and livelihood to over 85 per cent of the rural people. Though the economy of Bangladesh is still principally agrarian, agriculture can no longer provide gainful employment to even 50 per cent of the rural households. The increasing pressure of population on land coupled with a continuous process of river erosion in many areas has led to a serious state of landlessness and unemployment and consequently to migration of landless people to cities and towns of jobs. The massive influx of the poor and the distressed to the cities has given rise to a situation where jobs are scarce and the supply of unskilled labour is abundant. The dire consequence of this is the very low wage rate which is inadequate for maintenance of families of labourers at any standard. This forces the underaged children of the poor families to work for supplementing the income of their indigent families.

In such a situation children cannot get easy jobs and better wages. They have to engage themselves in hard manual work like crushing stones or bricks, carrying luggage or goods by headloads at railway or steamer stations, helping bus, truck and three-wheeler drivers, cleaning cars and buses and doing similar other jobs. They pick up waste papers and garbage and fallen leaves from the streets. They are usually called "street pickers" — street-kids or *lokals*.

These children do not get even enough food. They live in slums and wear tattered clothes. They don't get proper treatment and medicine in sickness. They suffer the scorching heat in summer and shiver in cold during winter. They are deprived of education and all common facilities of life.

While visiting the outskirts of the capital city in the recent past, President Hussain Muhammad Ershad came across some working children who were breaking bricks and stones with their tender hands. The President was shocked by the plight of these working children, *lokals* as they were called. Their present condition of hard and demanding labour; their future grim and dark. The President was palpably moved. He urged the people not to call them "Tokai" any more. That was a demeaning term. He renamed them as *pathakalis*, that is "blooming buds of the streets" who are growing up without any care and love but



Pathakali Trust

Building the future of street kids

deserve care and attention from a society with consciousness of the need of consideration of the disadvantaged.

The President instantaneously decided to arrange creation of opportunities of these "street kids" so that they could get education and health-care and acquire technical skills for participating in economic and social development processes. To achieve these objectives, it was decided to set up a trust, named the Pathakali Trust. The Pathakali Trust is designed to look after the welfare of the *pathakalis* to give them a good start in life.

The First Lady Begum Raushan Ershad, was profoundly moved by the sad plight of the *pathakalis*.

The trust as an institution of specialised social services for disadvantaged working boys and girls is geared to mobilise resources from all segments of the society, government and non-government. It would facilitate participation by better-off sections of the nation in the onerous task of assisting the under-

privileged children who have to work for a living.

The services and benefits of the trust are extended to:

(a) the underprivileged boys and girls engaged in odd jobs. These may include work as domestic help or porter in railway and steamer stations, work in the factories, shops, restaurants, motor garages or rickshaw and bicycle repairing workshops or crushing stones and bricks etc. for construction and building.

(b) the working boys and girls who are within the age group of 5 to 14 years.

Though the exact number of such floating *pathakalis*, "street-kids" in Dhaka and district towns of Bangladesh has not yet been precisely ascertained, it is assumed that it would be quite large. One of the early activities of the trust is to complete a comprehensive survey and study of the situation of *pathakalis* in Bangladesh.

The trust has been incorporated under the Societies Registration Act 1961.

Activities
The main activities of the Pathakali Trust are as follows:

(a) General Education Programmes.

(b) Technical and Vocational Education/Training Programmes.

(c) Programme for providing medical services to the *pathakalis*.

(d) Programme for recreational and cultural activities.

General Education
The objectives of the Trust are to assist the *pathakalis* in receiving general education of certain standards and in acquiring technical skills and good health so that they can join others in the mainstream of economic activities and thereby improve their present sub-standard living conditions. Therefore, the trust lays emphasis on the creation of facilities for general and technical education as well as health care.

The *pathakalis* cannot attend the normal schools because they

have to work during most of the day for earning their bread. They would not be able to stay in schools for long hours. Therefore, the trust has undertaken a programme for establishing special type of schools called "Pathakali schools" for them. Fifteen such schools have already been established (upto mid-January 1990).

Technical education programme: Technical education forms a very important part of the curriculum of education of the *pathakalis*. The purpose of technical education is to assist the *pathakalis* in acquiring useful technical skills so that they can get gainful employment in our strides for economic development, can contribute to the social and economic progress of the country and lead decent personal life.

The technical education will be imparted as part of the general education, with emphasis on selecting the trade for technical education, the demand for the particular trade in the market and its feasibility will be assessed.

The knack of the *pathakalis*, their attitude and aptitude and the previous experiences, if any, will be examined.

Pathakali schools
The Trust is running at present (upto mid-January, 1990) 15 schools of the underprivileged working children. The Honourable President of Bangladesh, Hussain Muhammad Ershad inaugurated the first two schools on January 3, 1989 in the outskirts of the capital city where there was concentration of the *pathakalis*. The number of students in the 15 existing schools is above three thousand five hundred.

Education in the pathakali school is free. Bnks, papers, pencils and other necessary materials are also provided to the students free of charge. Moreover, the school uniform and winter clothes are also given to the students from the trust.

The syllabus and other guidelines suitable to the needs and capabilities of the *pathakalis* are being prepared. Necessary facilities for providing technical education are also being created by the trust.

Expansion
The pathakali schools and other institutions will be set up in different parts of Dhaka in near future depending on the availability of funds.

The district committees have been instructed to set up at least one pathakali school, one Pathakali Medical Centre and one technical workshop for the pathakali as soon as possible.

The trust may expand in future not only to larger geographical areas but also to wider field of activities. Presently the activities are limited mainly to the provisions of general education, technical education and medical facilities for the *pathakalis*. In future, the trust will set up technical workshops adjacent to the schools for practical training of the students.

If funds can be arranged, the *pathakalis* may be given credit to start some income generating activities. Bank credit may also be arranged for them. Wherever possible, they may be grouped together for undertaking viable economic projects.

The expansion of the programme in size, area and activity depends on the generosity and magnanimity of persons belonging to better off classes and humanitarian organisations both local and foreign. The trust is very much open with regard to receipt of donations.

Flood control measures of the government of Bangladesh

BANGLADESH, being a flood prone country, has to concentrate her efforts toward flood mitigation measures by constructing flood embankment, channel improvement and development of flood forecasting and warning systems. The effective means of flood management by storage reservoirs is not possible within the territorial limit of Bangladesh.

Achievement:
As structural measures for flood mitigation, Bangladesh has constructed series of medium and small sized flood control and drainage (FCD) projects dispersed all over the country. Such projects cover about 40 per cent of flood vulnerable area but the catastrophic events of 1987 and 1988 amply demonstrated the inadequacy of such small projects designed mostly for shorter return periods.

Future Strategy:
Following the catastrophic floods of 1987 and 1988 there had been a renewed awakening nationally as well as internationally over floods in Bangladesh and their solution.

Effective flood protection is a prerequisite for development and subsequent economic growth; thus protection measures along the major rivers have become an imperative.

The government of Bangladesh has emphasised that a comprehensive national flood protection programme needs large projects aimed at controlling the high discharges that come from the upstream catchment. The strategy is, therefore:

(1) to accord the highest priority to flood protection;
(2) to implement effective flood protection works with emphasis on the need to confine major river flood water within channels;
(3) to further riparian co-operation leading to a long lasting solution.

International agencies such as UNDP, Usaid, French and Japan undertook studies to come up with a comprehensive flood protection plan and finally the World Bank has outlined an action plan.

Control
It is expected that a long term flood control plan will be

developed from the above studies and a phased implementation of the plan will be initiated soon with a view to finding a solution to this major problem which are technically, financially, economically and environmentally sound and viable.

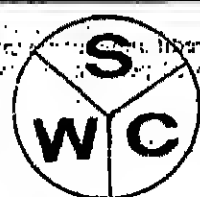
Simultaneously the government of Bangladesh has sought co-operation from neighbouring countries to work together for finding a lasting solution in the flood problem. In this connection bilateral forums such as Indo-Bangladesh Task-Force, Bangladesh-Nepal Joint Study Team, Bangladesh-Bhutan Joint Team of Officials, Bangladesh-China Joint Experts Team have been formed. Some of the committees in the mean time have completed their tasks and brought out specific recommendations. Bangladesh-China Experts Team have initiated a project on technical study for flood control of the Brahmaputra river.

Flood Forecasting Activities in Bangladesh.

The objective of the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FF & W) in Bangladesh is to prepare flood water level forecasts and inform the government authorities to enable them to transmit message to local officials and population as quickly as possible in order to organise emergency measures for which they are responsible.

Alert
The people in Bangladesh are always alert as to when floods will hit. Information is needed to give them time to evacuate before critical flood levels are reached and to salvage crops or move household possessions and cattle to higher places. It is also important for the public and local and national government authorities to know where flood problems are building up, where communication systems (roads, railways, etc) are likely to be hampered by floods and where rescue and relief teams need to be mobilized.

Present Status:
Quantitative flood forecasting is presently limited to the Ganges, Brahmaputra, Buriganga and Lakhya river, with a lead time of 24 hours, by the FF&W Centre.



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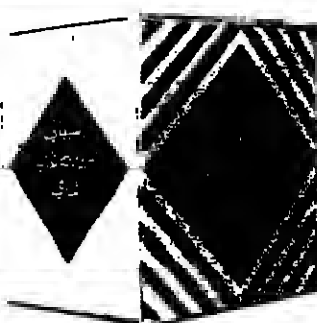
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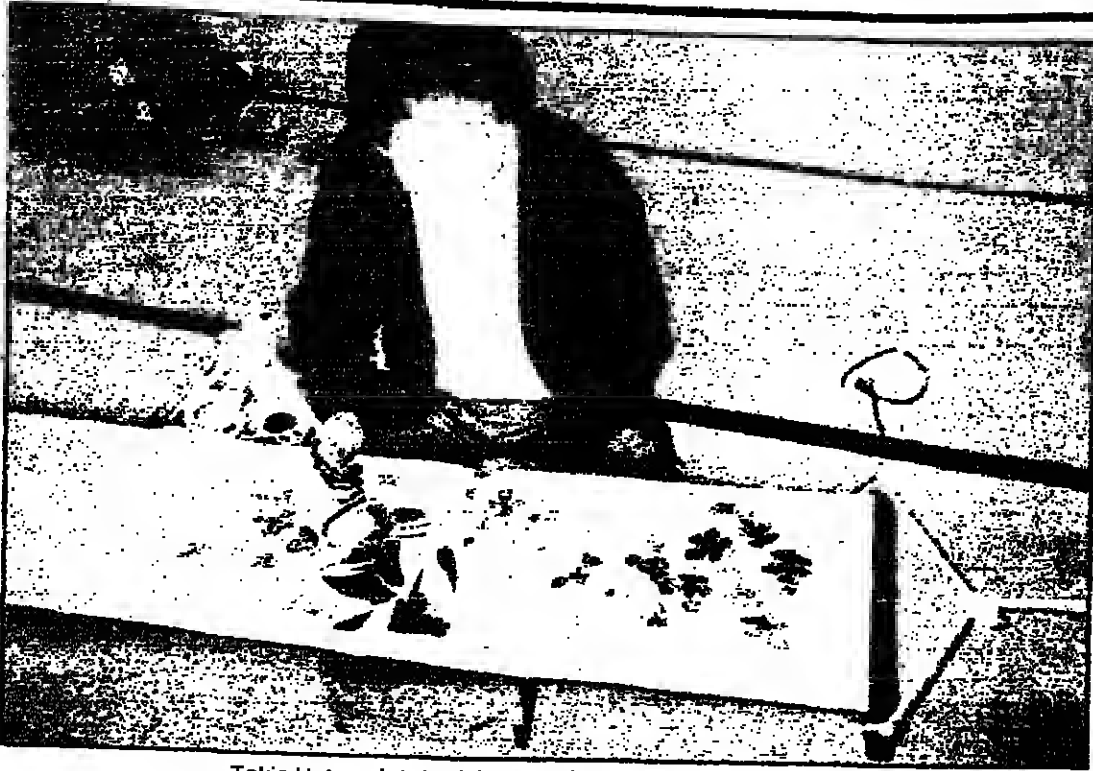
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Tokio Hata paints traditional designs on silk in his Kyoto Studio

Yuzen dyer

'National living treasure'

By Daniel Snider

KYOTO, Japan: From early childhood in the city of Kanazawa, near the Sea of Japan, Tokio Hata wanted to be a painter. He was 14 when his parents sent him to a neighbor to learn to the art.

The young Hata's neighbor practiced the ancient craft of yuzen-dyeing. Yuzen owes its name to its 17th-century founder, Miyazaki Yuzen. Instead of paper, the yuzen artist paints his pictures on naturally dyed strips of silk cloth. Then the cloth is made into kimono, the traditional Japanese dress.

"My parents thought of our neighbor as a painter, not a dyer," Mr. Hata recalls. "I found it strange that I was told to draw something on kimono cloth." For seven years, Hata was a deshi, an apprentice to his sensei, a word that combines the meaning of teacher and master.

Then his teacher sent him to the ancient Japanese capital of Kyoto, the center of arts and culture, where he studied the more refined style of Kyoto-yuzen for another eight years before setting off on his own.

Last year, at the age of 77, Hata's mastery of his art earned him the title of "national living treasure." Since 1955, the Japanese government has recognized the importance to the nation of artists in both the crafts and the performing arts. Currently there are 69 such "living treasures." "The title means the holder is told by the country to convey his or her technique to future generations," Hata explains. Each person gets an annual stipend to preserve their skills by training successors.

Today, the lively Hata has 23 deshi of his own, who study under him in an old two-story wooden house on a quiet Kyoto street. He leads visitors upstairs, where his students work copying his technique and producing kimono cloth that is exhibited in galleries and museums. A finished kimono by Hata sells for 10 million yen (about \$70,000). He proudly shows a picture of himself presenting one of his creations to Diana, the Princess of Wales.

The process of producing the cloth takes 17 separate steps. It begins with drawing a design on paper. Hata's paintings are elaborate, embodying classical Japanese themes of flowers, seasonal plants, and animals. His trademark is the beautifully marked Mandarin Duck, which appears in many of

his creations.

Hata compares what he does to his father's design of gardens.

"Gardening and drawing on kimono are similar," he explains over a cup of green tea. "The gardener thinks about where to create a pond, where to put hills, where to plant trees. It starts as a very plain place. At first a kimono, too, is white; there is nothing there. There are only some rules — to draw the design on the parts of the cloth which appear when the kimono is worn."

Long strips of white cloth are pulled tight between two poles, with curved wooden sticks placed like ribs to pull the cloth taut. The young deshi, men and women in jeans and T-shirts, sit on the straw mat floor drawing the design onto the textile in an indigo dye made from a flower.

Lines

The careful lines of the drawing are then coated with starch, and outlines hand painted in, and the colours fixed with steam. The dye for the cloth is brushed on. Finally the cloth is washed in water to fix the dyes and to remove the starch, leaving a white outline around the painted designs.

If one person alone did the whole process, it would take one month to finish the kimono. But the deshi work as a team, each one carrying out a specific phase of the process.

In the beginning, Hata admits, he would only teach his art to men, as was traditional. The deshi live together in a dorm, and the presence of a woman was considered highly unconventional. But more and more women came to him asking to be taught.

"I allowed a few women to become deshi, and they did pretty well," he says with a smile. "I thought maybe times are changing." Today the majority of his deshi are women. Someday, he says with a touch of pride, "I expect a female treasure may be named."

Yuzuki Inada was studying traditional Japanese painting at a college in Kyoto when a friend took her to an exhibit of Hata's work. From then on, she recalls, "I wanted to learn from this person." Mr. Hata "is a very kind man but he is very strict in his teaching," says the 29-year-old deshi. After eight years of apprenticeship, the young artist does not readily recommend her course.

Christian Science Monitor.

Ragin' on the Rattler down under

MELBOURNE: "Rock and roll" has taken on a whole new meaning in Melbourne.

Crammed with hubbubbing teenagers heading home, at 11:35 p.m. the Lilydale train lurches out of Flinders Station. Within seconds, the thump-thump track noise is drowned out by "Atlas," a band of 16-year-olds pumping out the first deafening chords of "When Love Comes to Town."

Welcome to the Saturday night "Safe Train" party. Or as locals say, "Ragin' on the Rattler."

The Safe Train is one suburban community's response to the problem of violence on its only public link to downtown Melbourne. Until four months ago, this was one of the region's most dangerous train lines.

"Lots of drunks, druggies, pervers. Kids were getting bashed. It was scary," recalls 16-year-old Kylie Wood.

"You'd expect it to be cool to say: 'Yeah, I travel the trains. You'd have to be a wimp not to travel the trains,'" says Safe

Train organizer Nick Foa. But when the Croyden Youth Council surveyed local teens, "they said, 'No way do we like using the trains.' ... So we knew we had a serious problem."

A small group of parents, police, and youth workers decided to do something. Thus, the Safe Train idea was hatched.

Each Saturday night, two graffiti-faced cars going into the city at 6 p.m. (and coming out on the second-to-last train) carry two plainclothes police officers, a parent volunteer or two, and a youth worker. One car has a live band, the other a somewhat less boisterous juke box.

But the Safe Train is only part of an integrated community program. When the train pulls into the Croyden stop at 12:30 a.m., 15 parents (from a roster of 70 volunteers) are standing on the platform to ensure that teens get off safely, disperse quietly, and get home. Those without rides can take a free bus, driven by volunteers from a local church. The bus is sponsored by a local bank.

Croyden has also set up a "garage" hand

programme to rechannel the energies of bored youth who might otherwise go into vandalism and gang activity. Some 150 youths — mostly 15- and 16-year-olds — converted an unused squash court into a practice studio, and organizes dances.

Safety

The combination of safety and entertainment is proving to be a big drawing card.

"Yeah, my parents want me to catch a Safe Train," says 16-year-old Ryan Peters after an evening of playing "pinball" (pinball in the city with his mates. "If it wasn't for the hand, I doubt I'd be allowed to go back on the train."

Transit authority baseline figures are more than two years old. But Melbourne officer Daryl Byrne says "it appears ridership is up as much as 200 per cent. And we've had no reports of vandalism at all on that train since the programme began."

Croyden Constable Robert Garside also says vandalism, loitering, and underage drinking in town appears to have

dropped since the programme started. "We've noticed the change already in kids who used to be our problem. They're being entertained over a 50-minute ride. We asked them, 'What would you be doing if you weren't listening to a band?' Out of boredom, they say, they'd be slashing seats, breaking windows, punching somebody."

Another benefit, says Constable Garside, is that "our rapport with kids has improved. We talk to them on the train. We're no longer the big bad bogey-men."

In its short life, the Safe Train has been given a national award for "most innovative approach to a community issue" by a local government. But there's plenty of skepticism, too. By creating a small zone of safety, critics say, Croyden is not addressing the real source of the juvenile crime problem.

There is no single cause, replies Foa, the youth worker. "But at least we have taken one positive step in creating a safe environment."

Christian Science Monitor.



This Tokio Hata Kimono will sell for \$70,000

Chinese cinema industry

Once flourishing, now in disarray

By Sarah Lubman

BEIJING, (UPI): After a heady period of experimentation and worldwide acclaim in the late 1980s, China's once-flourishing film industry is in sad disarray.

The smoke had not yet cleared from last June's violent crackdown on the pro-democracy movement when the Chinese government reasserted the supremacy of Marxist ideology in all sectors of society. The movie business has suffered from the fallout.

Filmmakers now find their creativity stifled under renewed political control over the arts. Two of the country's most talented directors, who brought success like *The Old Well* and *King of the Children* to the screen, are in self-imposed exile abroad.

Within China, leading members of the film community privately grumble over a shrill government campaign against "bourgeois liberalism," a vague term denoting western cultural influences.

But the official hard line shows no sign of retreat and hucking the party line can mean more than bad reviews in China.

After last year's crackdown, the government issued arrest warrants for the creators of *River Elegy*, a controversial 1988 television film that dared to question whether feudal Chinese traditions were responsible for the country's current backwardness.

Roles

A well-known Chinese film critic, who asked not to be identified, said the re-emphasis on propaganda in the arts translates into sweeping censorship imposed both by the government and film directors themselves.

"Don't expect anything but that from Chinese cinema for the next year or two," the critic said with a resigned shrug.

All Chinese films must be approved by the State Film Bureau. But industry sources say conservative, elderly leaders are enjoying a greater say in the

bureau's decisions that in past years.

The sources said one recently submitted script with a non-fiction military theme drew objections from several veteran revolutionaries who felt their real-life roles were diminished.

In keeping with the stress on propaganda, the film bureau disclosed recently that the number of "revolutionary history" scripts submitted jumped to 24 — over just three last year.

And to drive the point home, a recent conference on movie production called for strengthened censorship of films judged "disadvantageous to socialism," and announced that inspection teams will be sent to all film studios.

It is uncertain whether more patriotic themes will bring in larger audiences.

The number of moviegoers in China dropped to 16 billion last year from 18 billion in 1988, ring-

ing up box office receipts of \$425 million, according to recent statistics.

The rapid decline of the innovation Xian Film Studio illustrates the state of the national industry. Once the creative center of Chinese cinema, Xian is now in severe financial straits after a string of internationally acclaimed art films that fared abysmally at home.

Scope

Former studio chief Wu Tianming, the iconoclastic director who once led demands for greater artistic autonomy, is in the United States. He has elected to stay abroad indefinitely.

The director of 1988's award-winning *The Old Well*, Wu is regarded as the man who brought China's films to world attention.

Under the aegis of his innovative studio, Wu helped foster young stars of China's so-

called "fifth generation" directors like Zhang Yimou, director of the acclaimed *Red Sorghum*, and Chen Kaige, who won awards with *King of the Children* and *Yellow Earth*.

Like his mentor, Chen has chosen to remain in the United States, where he has lived for the past two years. But both Chen and Wu were quoted in recent interviews as saying they hoped to return.

Response

Veteran director Xie Fei believes there is scope for artistic creativity and integrity in a market dominated by flashy Kung Fu films, melodramas and heavy-handed propaganda extravaganzas.

"There's a way to say what you want to say," said the soft-spoken Xie in an interview at the Beijing Film Academy, where he serves as vice-president and professor in the directing depart-

ment. "You just have to find that narrow channel of opportunity and make the best of it when it arises."

Xie's latest film, *The Year of Bad Luck*, testifies to his patience and persistence. Based on a popular novel, *The Year of Bad Luck* depicts the tragic fate of a young ex-convict who tries to lead an honest life as a private entrepreneur against overwhelming odds.

Actor Jiang Wen, China's leading film star at only 26, gives moving performance as the frustrated, lonely ex-convict.

The film has won praise from the young, urban audience for whom it was intended. Young Chinese viewers say they identify with what they see as the spiritual emptiness and alienation gripping Jiang Wen's character.

His response is all the more potent in the aftermath of June's violent crackdown. Popular resentment of the government runs high in Beijing, where the movie is set.

Naturally, the film's recreation of a seedy private entrepreneur society, featuring wheezing and dealing in amoral, materialistic surroundings, created problems for the censors.

In one scene, Jiang, wearing dark glasses, sits flipping idly through pornographic magazines while a state radio broadcast on strengthening anti-porn propaganda drones in the background. The juxtaposition brought giggles from Chinese viewers.

Xie, who spent a year at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles teaching a course on Chinese film, is acutely aware of the difficulties Chinese filmmakers face.

"In China, there are three motives for making movies: politics, money, and art. The question is how to balance the three," he said.

"The best solution is to make money-makers first, then do artistic films. I'm trying to keep my distance from politics."

FAMILY DOCTOR

By DR ALLAN BRUCKHEIM

QUESTION: I was told that a woman who is breast-feeding her child should, under no circumstances, lose weight. I'm nursing 5-month-old now and am approximately 25 pounds overweight. I'm seriously considering continuing to breast-feed my infant beyond the first six months, but I can't live with the extra weight. If I do lose weight, could it possibly harm either the baby or myself? Thank you for your consideration.

ANSWER: I have heard of the admonition against weight loss that you refer to, and am happy that information may not be too widespread because it's wrong. The weight gained during a normal pregnancy is there for a special reason, to provide the mother with the nutritional reserves necessary to provide her baby with the nourishment gained through breast-feeding. Ask any woman who hasn't breast-fed her infant about the troubles returning to pre-pregnancy weight levels and you will understand that your decision has been the right one.

You certainly can lose weight without danger to yourself or baby. The only caution I would have is not to try to crash diet to reduce your weight, but to increase your activity gradually and continue to nurse as before. This will lead to a gradual and safe weight loss.

Just to check my information I contacted La Leche International (P.O. Box 1209, Franklin Park, Ill. 60131-8209, for you and others who may wish more information) and they connected me with Don's Esposito, who discussed this with me and gave some additional information.

By providing your infant with its daily nutritional needs, you're burning up about 700 calories. That adds up to about a 1-pound weight loss every five days, if you eat only

WEIGHT LOSS IS A NATURAL RESULT OF BREAST-FEEDING

the amount of food your body consumes for its own metabolism. Your 25-pound excess will just about be gone by the time you breast-feed your infant for four more months. Give or take an extra snack here and there, you'll probably come out even after six months and bestow upon your baby the head start that only mothers can provide.

ACROSS MY DESK: Frequently I receive letters that ask about the quality of care that can be obtained in smaller community hospitals compared with that available in larger university centers or tertiary care referral centers. An article in the most recent issue of the *Journal of The American Board of Family Practice*, written by Dr. George J. Taylor and his collaborators from the Prairie Cardiovascular Center and the Southern University School of Medicine, Springfield, Ill., compares the result of clot dissolving treatment in patients with acute heart attacks, administered in both small community hospitals and a major medical center.

A study that ran from September 1982 to December 1987, involving 1,012 patients, showed that the results were remarkably similar in the accuracy of diagnosis and outcome of the treatment. Even the statistics about complications were about the same. While the authors concluded that primary care physicians could use this intravenous thrombolytic safely and effectively in community hospitals as cardiologists in referral centers, they also believed that results could be even better if treatment could have been started earlier. Improved awareness of the symptoms of a heart attack by patients could reduce treatment delays and improve the chances of their survival. 1990 Tribune Media Services, Inc.

Egypt's frontiersmen

A link in border security

HURGHADA, Egypt, (Reuters): The four-legged member of the team is tall, slow, shaggy — and belches frequently.

He is a 10-year-old white camel striding slowly along a windswept stretch of inhospitable desert bordering the Red Sea.

His master walks ahead, intently studying the stony ground.

It is a team effort. The camel, called "peugeot," normally carries Mohammed Salahuddin, a highly specialized tracker, for about seven hours on a daily patrol covering some 30 km (30 miles).

When tracks are clearly visible, Salahuddin can leave "Peugeot" to follow them, otherwise the two-legged partner in Egypt's frontier guard force must dismount and walk.

"I know what a man's footprints mean and whether they are two hours or a day old," said Salahuddin. "I can tell from the indentations left by his feet if the man was running, or was injured. I know if he was armed, carrying something in his arms or on his back."

Every day, whenever Egypt borders slice through rugged mountains or waterless deserts, teams of individual soldiers and their camels set out from their lonely outposts, trekking to the next position in the morning and back again the same evening, searching for signs of illicit intrusion.

Apart from his portable radio and Kalashnikov rifle, Salahuddin differs little in appearance from the men first recruited for the frontier force set up in 1917 by a British Major-General Charlton Spinks.

Salahuddin wears a brown turban, a heavy frock coat, puttees and a leather bandolier containing clips of ammunition.

Drug traffickers, gun-runners, suboteurs, guerrillas — anyone who attempts to enter Egypt illegally will come up against the frontier guards.

But there is much more to this arm of the Egyptian armed forces than camels and trackers, both recruited from southern Egypt.

Intruders face an armada of fast patrol boats, helicopters and four-wheel drive vehicles equipped with mobile radars and night vision devices.

The man-and-camel unit or "hagana" is simply one link in the chain of border security.

In war, the force provides an early warning trip-wire. It also acts as reconnaissance units or a blocking force in rough terrain. In peace, duties are complex and varied.

One frontier intelligence officer told Reuters smugglers offered him 600,000 Egyptian pounds (230,000 dollars) to "look the other way."

Over three months he won their confidence, finally trapping the criminals with the use of hidden cameras and microphones and intercepting one of the world's biggest hauls of drugs — five tonnes of hashish brought in from the Mediterranean last year.

Hashish and opium are usually dropped from a smuggler's boat in a pre-arranged spot after dusk, the drugs hidden in tyres and covered in black polythene. The tyres float, and protect the drugs from razor-sharp coral reefs and rocks until the consignment is picked up by the drug ring's local distributors.

But little gets through now-a-days. One senior frontier force officer said his men had a success rate of 85 per cent in stopping shipments to the Egyptian drugs market, largely through sound detective work, undercover surveillance and a vast network of contacts and informers.

The force's work does not end there. When a car is lost during an international desert rally, the frontier force goes in. When a yacht founders on a reef, the force — which includes the country's coast guard — responds to the Mayday call.

The Red Sea area is particularly active. Not only do the constant sun and warm sea bring thousands of tourists to its beaches and marinas, but fishing is an important industry.

Protecting fisheries from foreign intruders and ensuring that local fleets do not use illegal fishing methods is part of a day's work for a frontier force officer.

He must know the country's nature conservation laws, making sure that falcons do not try to trap the desert's Sphingid hawk, a rare bird that can fetch 20,000 dollars in the Gulf.

Hours are long but there was no mistaking the esprit de corps during four days spent with the force.

A unit commander will probably get through his routine paperwork by early afternoon. But he will be lucky to get to bed before midnight. The telephones keep on ringing.

A fishing boat has been seen loitering in a prohibited area, a foreign yacht is in trouble, a freighter has been accidentally damaged and a suspicious object has washed up on a beach — all incidents in one night.

One officer, a former member of Egypt's crack commandos and in his younger days a star footballer, covered 50,000 km (30,000 miles) in his jeep over nine months on various undercover assignments.

"It's the variety and knowing the job matters that keeps us going," he said.



A member of the frontier force walks in front of his camel carrying a radio and a rifle.

Jiang Wen: China's De Niro

China's leading actor, Jiang Wen, quit smoking for good in a matter of seconds.

It was an accident. I was talking to a friend who bet me I couldn't stop smoking if I tried," he recalled.

"I said I bet I could. I was in the middle of a cigarette at the time and I put it out right there. That was that."

The incident is illustrative of Jiang's resolve. At just 26, the Beijing native is widely acclaimed as China's most talented actor, proving his versatility in roles ranging from a rugged peasant to an ex-convict to a 60-year-old graybeard.

Stockily built, far from the conventionally handsome, square-jawed types who dominate China's movie screens, Jiang's most prominent feature are his enormous ears. Moreover, he was trained as a stage performer, not a film actor, graduating from Beijing's central academy of drama in 1984.

Yet he has won unanimous praise from critics and directors for throwing himself into roles so thoroughly that his co-actors are drawn in. The result is strikingly natural and convincing in a country where stagey, overblown acting remains the rule.

"There's no one to match him," said veteran director Xie Fei, who directed Jiang in his latest film. "He's got such a finely developed artistic sense."

As American actor Robert De Niro did for his role in *Raging Bull*, Jiang has been known to go to extremes to alter his physical appearance, once rubbing his forehead raw for a fight scene in lieu of applying makeup.

Although Jiang has appeared regularly in films since 1985, winning top Chinese awards for best actor in 1988 and 1989, his talents have gone largely unnoticed in the West.

As co-star in *Red Sorghum*, released in the United States in 1988 to mixed reviews, Jiang's performance was overshadowed by the attention lavished on creative young director Zhang Yimou.

That may change with his latest film, *The Year of Bad Luck*, in which he gives his most compelling performance. The film recently won a silver bear award at Berlin's annual film festival, and several prints already have been sold abroad.

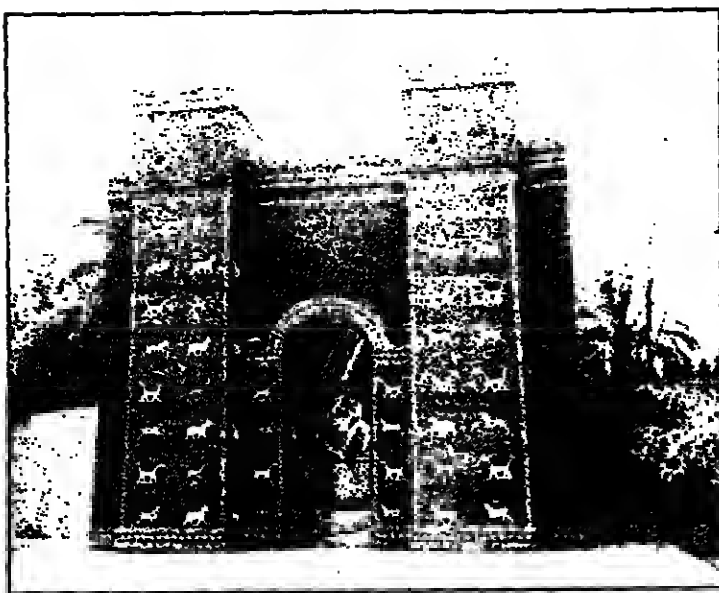
Jiang, who looks ill at ease during public appearances and says he had difficulty coming to terms with his recent fame, has his own theory on why acting affords him so much satisfaction.

"I think all artists are dissatisfied with life," he said. "They crave something beyond what they've got, beyond daily life, so they create something to make up for the lack."

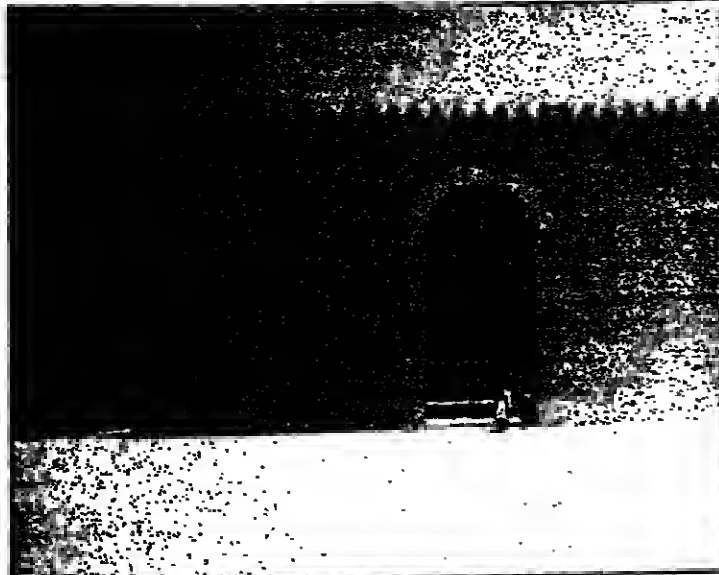
"I'm like that too. Acting makes me feel better."

VARIETY

Babylon: symbol of lavish splendour



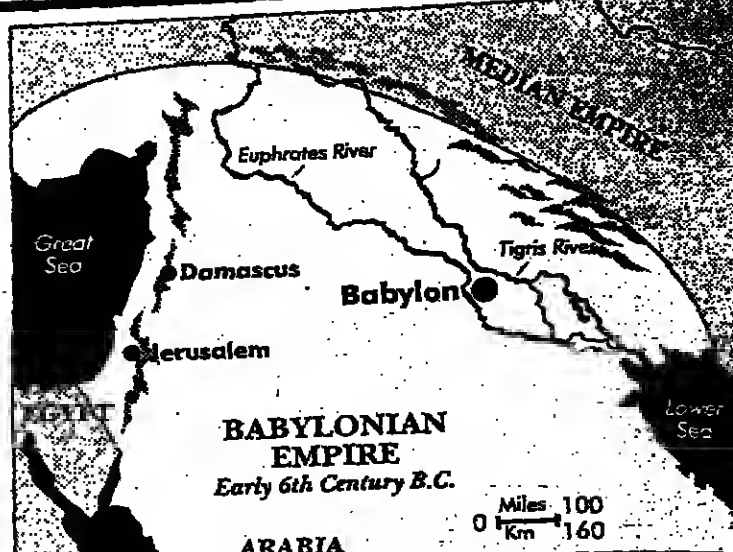
The Babylon Gate: past glory



A part of Nebuchadnezzar's Palace that was rebuilt



Nebuchadnezzar's Palace, yet to be constructed

BABYLONIAN EMPIRE
Early 6th Century B.C.
Miles 100
Km 160

By George D. Moffett III

BABYLON, Iraq (CSM): Eager to reclaim the glories of its ancient past, Iraq is now translating its most famed archaeological site into one of its biggest tourist attractions.

Babylon — "that great city that was clothed in fine linen and purple" — has been brought back to life after a 2,000-year nap with an ambitious \$25 million development programme that has produced feelings of pride in Iraq and criticism from some archaeologists, who fear that commercialism may diminish its value to scholars.

A leading city in Mesopotamia, the fertile plain between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers where Western civilization was born, Babylon was briefly the capital of one of the most powerful empires in the ancient world. Even today it is a symbol both of lavish splendour and moral decadence.

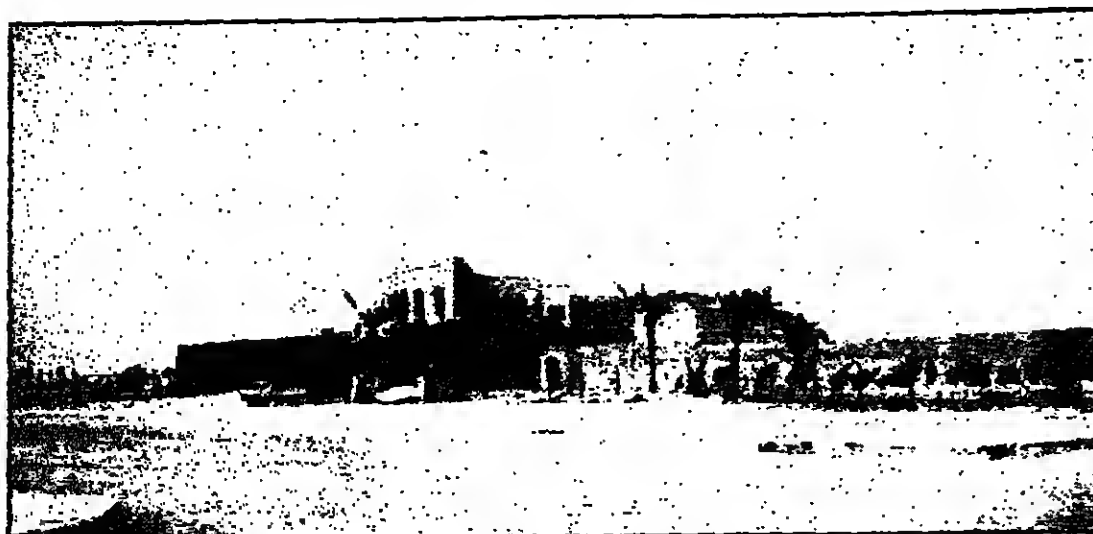
Although the site of Babylon, an hour's drive south of the capital of Baghdad, has been known locally through history, no serious excavations were undertaken until a German expedition began digging in the late 1800s, leaving behind the exposed ruins of several palaces and temples.

In 1979, Iraq launched its own project to restore Babylon to a more visible grandeur.

The centerpiece of the reconstruction effort is the massive southern palace of Nebuchadnezzar II, Babylon's most powerful king, who conquered Jerusalem and carried the Jews into their second captivity. Built around five huge courtyards, the palace walls have been reconstructed to a height of between 24 and 42 feet with new bricks, many bearing the inscription "restored in the era of Saddam Hussein," Iraq's current president.

The reconstruction plan also calls for hotels, restaurants, and other tourist facilities designed to make Babylon one of the biggest attractions in the region.

Iraq tries to reclaim the glories of its ancient past



The Amphitheatre

The government has even offered a \$1.5 million prize to anyone who can match the technology used to elevate Euphrates water to Babylon's legendary hanging gardens, cited by the Greek historian Herodotus as one of the seven wonders of the world. No remains of the gardens have been found but some Babylon experts believe they may have been constructed over one wing of the southern palace.

The ambitious development scheme has concerned some archaeologists, who worry about the possible crush of tourists and prefer to let imagination based on unreconstructed ruins — rather than possibly faulty designs — be the guide to what Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon may have looked like.

"Once you turn a site like this into a major tourist attraction it ceases to be an archaeological site," says a Western archaeologist.

ist who regularly excavates in Iraq.

Iraqi officials in charge of the project insist that Babylon needs to be comprehensible to the nonspecialist for whom piles of ancient rubble would mean little. "Before, all there was was dust and palm trees; everyone was disappointed when they saw Babylon," says the director of Iraq's Department of Antiquities, Mouayyad Said, of the improvements made at the site.

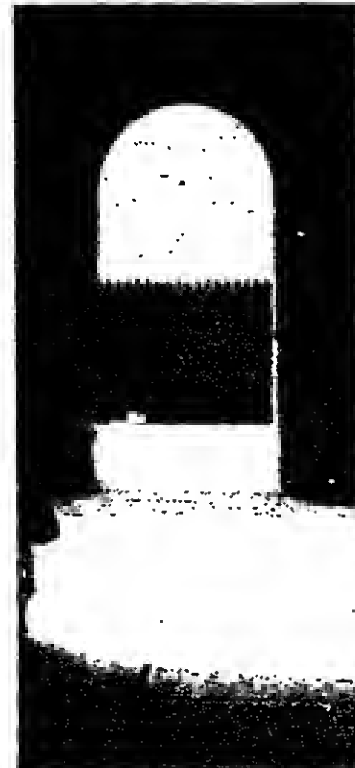
"What we did was completely scientific work," adds Dr Said, who says only "reasonable" designs were used for the reconstruction, new materials were kept visibly distinct from the old, and roofs, plaster, trim, and windows were left out to maintain the integrity of the work.

"We are scientists, not builders," he says. Babylon first came into

prominence nearly 4,000 years ago under a dynasty that included Hammurabi, the law-giver, who made it the capital of a kingdom comprising all of southern Mesopotamia. Although the famous obelisk bearing Hammurabi's code of laws was found in Persia (Iran) and now sits in the Louvre in Paris, the ruins of "old" Babylon are largely inaccessible because of high levels of groundwater.

Tourists
The Babylon visible to tourists today is largely the work of neo-Babylonian monarchs including Nebuchadnezzar, who during his 43-year reign (605-562 BC) literally covered over many existing buildings to create his grand city.

"What strikes you is the gigantic scale of Nebuchadnezzar's undertaking," says the Western archaeologist. The city at its zenith had a population of one



The rebuilt entrance to Nebuchadnezzar's Palace

million and covered an area of nearly 8 square miles. It straddled the Euphrates and was entirely surrounded by massive defensive walls.

Before the modern excavations were begun, what was known of ancient Babylon was gleaned from classical writers like Herodotus, who may or may not have actually visited the city.

Since the digging began, fragments of hundreds of clay cuneiform tablets have been unearthed, many written by Babylonian priests and court historians,

which have given a surprisingly complete picture of the layout of the Mesopotamian capital: the location of major buildings, the course of the Euphrates (which has now shifted several hundred yards to the west), the site of bridges, canals and temples.

In this seeming metropolis, according to the Biblical account, one Hebrew captive, Daniel, was elevated to political prominence and later thrown to the lions, while three others, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were cast into the furnace of refusing to worship the king's idol. After making Babylon his own capital 300 years later, Alexander the Great died in Nebuchadnezzar's southern palace.

Centre
The centre of the empire, Babylon in its brief heyday, which lasted until it was conquered by the Persians under Cyrus in 539 BC, was also a place where science and philosophy, mathematics and astronomy flourished.

"Babylon deserves more than the curses it has received," says Said. "It gathered all the experience of the ancient world."

In addition to the southern palace, the reconstruction includes a half-size replica of the great Ishtar Gate through which passed Babylon's main ceremonial thoroughfare, Procession Way, also visible today. Although unpainted bulls and dragons can be seen on remnants of the original gate, the brilliant blue enameled bricks that adorned it were carried off to Berlin's Pergamon Museum at the time of the German excavation.

Nearby, in a shallow pool of water, lie the foundation stones of a 300-foot tower that was constructed in the sixth century BC, on what archaeologists say could be the site of the legendary Tower of Babel referred to in Genesis.

A model based on the ground plan recovered at the site, plus dozens of artists' conceptions of the tower "whose top may reach unto heaven," may be seen in a small museum adjacent to the southern palace.

On the track of the ME virus

LONDON, (LPS): The energy-sapping condition known as ME — short for myalgic encephalomyelitis — has been confirmed by a research team from the neurology department at Glasgow Southern General Hospital in Scotland. Until now, medical opinion about ME has been divided with many doctors suggesting the symptoms are psychological.

New research led by Glasgow University professor Kenneth Behan has found traces of a virus in the muscle of ME sufferers that might explain their severe fatigue. Prof. Behan has strictly defined the syndrome as severe chronic fatigue lasting from one to several years with or without psychiatric complications, and precipitated by a definite viral infection.

His patients were compared with those suffering from severe depression, auto-immune and rheumatoid disorders as well as healthy people. He then used the polymerase chain reaction to search for viruses in their muscle.

This technique is able to amplify DNA or genetic molecules more than a millionfold and has already been used successfully to identify genetic material in blood stains, hair and sperm, or the AIDS virus in patients who appear to be HIV negative.

Segment
The Glasgow researchers found that where they looked at individual muscle cells of ME sufferers they found that the energy-producing apparatus of the cell was abnormal. In 36 per cent of cases they identified the presence of a particular viral segment common to the Coxsackie viruses.

Prof. Behan commented: "We do not know how the presence of this virus in muscle or other cells could cause them to function abnormally, but we have already carried out a variety of functional and structural studies which suggest that it is the energy-producing apparatus of the cell, the mitochondria, which is damaged. These findings are significant because they show that the disease does indeed exist and they point the way to further research."

The professor has just presented these preliminary results of the team's work to the International Meeting on Chronic Viral Fatigue Syndrome held in Los Angeles (February 18). He stressed that the Coxsackie virus is not the only virus likely to be involved in ME. Future research will look for the herpes zoster virus, which causes chicken pox and shingles in muscle tissue.

Sistine Chapel

Freed from centuries of dust and smoke

VATICAN CITY, (Agencies): The Vatican on Friday unveiled a multi-million-dollar restoration — paid for by a Japanese television network — of one of the world's greatest art treasures, the ceiling Michelangelo painted for the Sistine Chapel.

For the first time in hundreds of years visitors will see the whole mammoth fresco in its original dazzling colours, freed from four centuries of dust and candle-smoke.

The Renaissance master took more than 30 years between 1508 and 1541 to paint the story of how God created the world and chased Adam and Eve from paradise.

Asked if the end result put to rest a bitter controversy over whether the \$3-million, 10-year restoration damaged the frescoes, project

director Fabrizio Mancinelli told a news conference.

"We do not want to enter into controversy. We did our best, and now we will explain what we did with an international conference of experts in Rome and an exhibition."

Smoke from the candles, braziers and torches lighting papal services and conclaves to choose a new pope quickly dulled Michelangelo's work.

Dampness and thick layers of yellowing varnish liberally splashed on by would-be restorers over the centuries darkened his bright oranges and yellows even more.

An exhibition on the restoration, which Pope John Paul opened on Saturday, boasts a life-size copy of one section which shows how

Michelangelo, standing on a platform with his head thrown back, had to paint huge, distorted figures to make them look life-like from below.

Scaffolding has already been erected in the Chapel to clean the 160 square metres (1,800 square feet) of the violent "Last Judgement" on the Chapel's altar wall — a swirling vision of earth, heaven and hell it took Michelangelo seven years to paint.

Vatican Museums director Carlo Pietrangeli said it could take four years to restore this work, showing 300 figures, the good rising to heaven and the evil falling to hell, with a forbidding Christ casts them into the hands of ugly devils.

The restorers were reluctant to be drawn on whether they would strip away the veils popes

ordered painted over the bodies' genitals. But Mancinelli said some veils added in the 16th century could not be removed because their artist used the same fresco technique as Michelangelo.

"If I took those off, I'd have to make a hole in the panel. I shouldn't think you want me to do that," he said.

Some 16th century church officials were shocked by the nude figures in the "Last Judgement," and in 1564, Pope Pius IV ordered the most "indecent" nudes to be covered up by artist Daniele da Volterra.

Some art experts argue the loincloths should now be removed, but Mancinelli said the "rules" of Italian restoration call for all essential elements of an artwork to be maintained.

English terms are big players at EC briefings

Blending French and English

BRUSSELS (UPI): French, with subtle words like "détente," has long been the language of diplomacy, but some not-so-delicate English terms are also big players at the European Community.

The daily EEC briefings are given in French but some off-used phrases would hardly please "the 40 immortals" of the Académie Française, the conservative watchdogs of the French language.

Terms like "anti-dumping," "fact-finding mission" and "task force" are staples at the noon briefings.

Others heard often include "mid-term review" and "disputes-settlement procedure," a mouthful sure to wake up a drowsy reporter lulled into a dreamland by sweetly serenading French on a slow news day.

To those whose native tongue is English, the briefings sound like a group of foreign tourists seeking directions in New York or London: terms like "Empire State Building" or "Buckingham Palace" stand out like moonbeams amid otherwise exotic dialect.

A mix of English and French is common at the EEC, sometimes using initials: legislation dealing with an "open network provision" in telecommu-

ications is called "a directive ONP. Available credits from the International Monetary Fund are "les credits standby."

"Off the record" is a fixture at the briefings, sometimes used in a blinding blend of French and English.

One spokesman often says, "Je suis off" (I am off the record), mutters a few remarks not for publication, then proclaims, "Je suis on" to signify the briefing is back on the record. At times it's rapid fire, with just a few of usable information squeezed in between "Je suis on" and "Je suis off."

Many of the European Economic Community's most-used Angloisms stem from the 97-nation General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which conducts its business in English.

"Whatever term is first on the market is the one that everybody uses," says Isabelle Le Moal, an EEC spokesman from Brittany in northwestern France.

With some concepts, like "anti-dumping," there is no suitable French term, in other cases, like "background briefing," the English expression has simply taken on a life of its own.

English

WARNER Bros. set an all-time movie industry record this month when its films were shown across 6,876 of the 23,000 screens in the United States and Canada.

Films contributing to the record number of theatre playdates were Joe versus the volcano, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Hard to Kill*, *Lambada*, *Tango & Cash*, *Men Don't Leave*, *Notional Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* and *Roger & Me*.

Still playing in the theatres are such Warner holdovers as *Batman* and *Lethal Weapon 2*, accounting for 80 screens between them.

Keaton cast
Michael Keaton, star of last year's blockbuster *Batman*, will play a different kind of law enforcer in the crime drama *One Good Cop* for Disney's Hollywood pictures.

One Good Cop will be Keaton's first film project for the Walt Disney studios as well as the directorial debut of screenwriter-author Heywood Gould, who wrote the screenplay for *Cocktail*.

Keaton will play a hardened New York city detective who is suddenly given the custody of three young girls when his long-

time partner is killed in the line of duty.

Previn and Jazz
Pianist-conductor Andre Previn heads back into the studio this month to record his second jazz album in as many years for the Telarc label.

The new recording, *Over the Rainbow*, will celebrate the music of Harold Arlen. Last year's highly regarded session, *After Hours*, with bassist Ray Brown and guitarist Joe Pass, was Previn's first jazz recording in three decades.

Back in the platinum
Quincy Jones' all-star conceptual album *Back on the Block* has gone platinum, as certified by the Recording Industry Association of America for selling more than one million copies.

The funk-jazz-pop-rap album features the Chaka Khan-Ray Charles hit *I'll Be Good to You* and a new single, *Secret Garden*, with James Ingram, El DeBarge, Barry White and Al B. Sure.

Burr role
Raymond Burr will play a rare comedy role in *Delirious*, a new movie starring John Candy, Mariel Hemingway and Emma Samms.

Burr will be seen as the patriarch of a family of characters who exist only in the mind of a soap opera writer played by Candy, but who somehow comes to life.

For the past five years Burr has played the Perry Mason role in several two-hour movies for television. In addition to his series, Burr has appeared on such TV shows as *Kingston*, *79 Park Ave.* and *Centennial*.

Star team
James Earl Jones and Richard Crenna will team up to star in *Last Flight Out* for NBC-TV, a two-hour film dealing with a group of Americans who risked their lives to save 500 Vietnamese civilians.

The story involves the fact-based drama of the men aboard the last commercial flight out of Saigon in 1975, which carried both Vietnamese citizens and Americans out of the country.

Also appearing in the large cast are Haing S. Ngor, Arliss Howard, Eric Bogosian, Rosalind Wiseman, Elizabeth Lindsey, Bary Corbin and Molly Hagen.

Wein salute
Jazz producer George Wein

will be honoured April 11 with a musical salute at Carnegie Hall for his contributions to the entertainment industry.

All-star performers at the event include Joe Williams, Wynton Marsalis, Dianne Reeves, Billy Taylor, David Sanborn, George Benson, Jon Faddis, Tito Puente, Stanley Jordan and Bill Cosby.

The event is a benefit for WBGO-FM in Newark, N.J., the prime jazz station in Metropolitan New York.

Fox feat
The Fox Broadcasting Company has been awarded a three-year contract to broadcast the annual primetime Emmy Awards of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

The contract calls for Fox to telecast annually in Los Angeles and New York the Academy's previously non-televised presentations of Emmy Awards for creative arts categories. These awards will also air in primetime over Fox owned stations, KTTV in Los Angeles and WNYW-TV in New York.

An Academy spokesman announced that the annual "Television Academy Hall of

Fame" presentations, broadcast by Fox for the past three years, will not be broadcast by Fox this year.

Wahl Graduates

Ken Wahl, star of TV's *Wiseguy* series, is the latest small screen star to move up to feature films with his assignment to play the lead in *The Taking of Beverly Hills*.

Co-starring with Wahl in the action adventure drama are Harley Kozak, currently working in Steven Spielberg's *Arch of Grief*, and Mark Frewer of *Max Headroom* fame.

The taking of Beverly Hills will be directed by Sidney J. Fury and deals with a massive sting operation to plunder the wealth of one of America's richest cities.

Jacob's pillow gala

Dancers Ann Reinking, Marge Champion and Judith Jamison will host a gala fundraiser April 18 at the Waldorf-Astoria's starlight room to benefit the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in Becket, Mass.

Proceeds from the \$300-per-ticket event will benefit the inaugural season of the Pillow's new 150-seat studio theatre.

BLONDIE

By Dean Young & Stan Drake



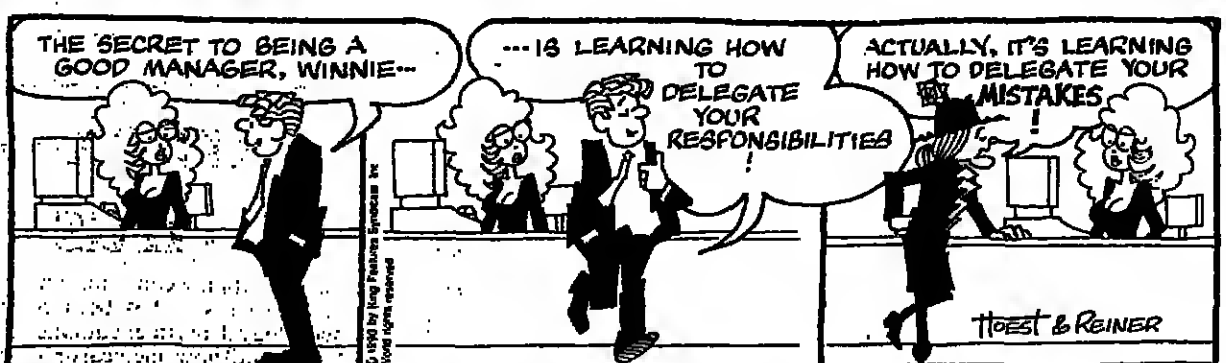
NAGAR THE HORRIBLE

By Dik Browning



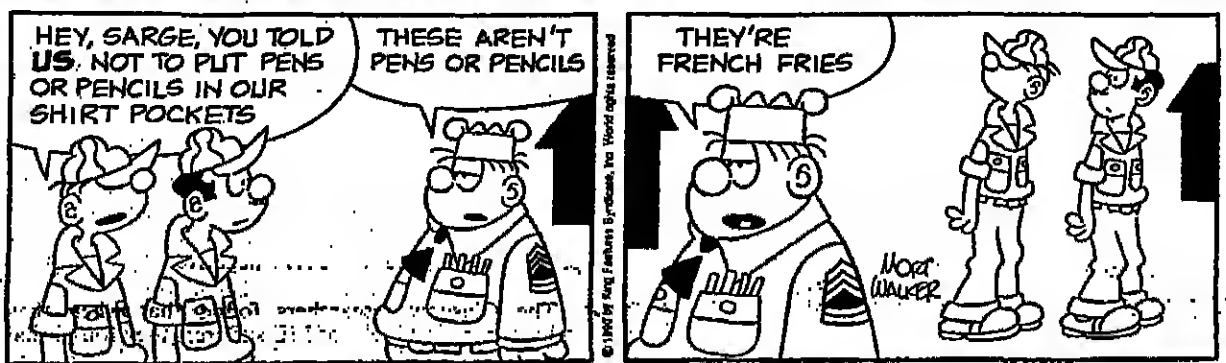
AGATHA CRUMH

By Bill Hoest



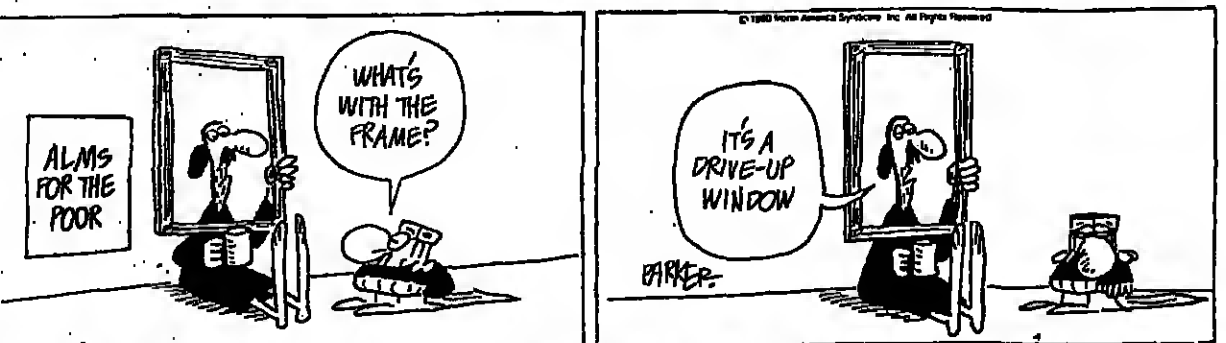
DEET BAILEY

By Bill Hoest



THE WIZARD OF ID

By Bill Hoest



ANDY CAPP

By Bill Hoest



THE WIZARD OF ID

By Bill Hoest

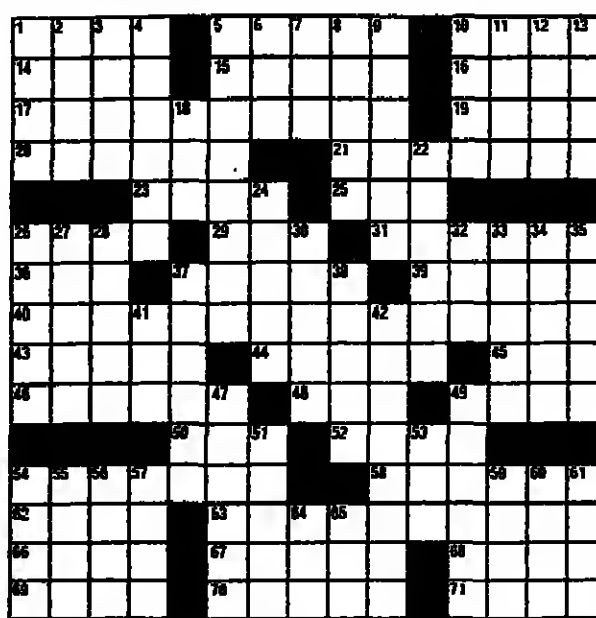


HE-MAN

By D. Fortin & J. Shull



TODAY'S CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- Your majesty!
 - Impudent
 - October birthstone
 - Soviet mountains
 - Alpine crest
 - Leningrad's river
 - Burlesque queens, often
 - Washed
 - Mean
 - Baffled
 - Social worker
 - Jacob
 - Entertainer
 - Zadora
 - Heads of hair
 - Always, to Shelley
 - Razing remains
 - "Gotchal"
 - Crane's kin
 - Skirt inserts
 - With "The", ballet music from
 - Of a district
 - Peter, Paul or Patrick
 - Shoe section
 - Actor Karl
 - No, for one: Abbr.
 - Attention-getters
 - Classic car
 - Gunnery command
 - Laundry employee
 - Approached
 - Flow from a volcano
 - Astaire-Rogers arena
 - August
 - Sidestep
 - Laboratory heater
- DOWN**
- Mohammedan mystic
 - Oil-producing land
 - Blow off steam
 - Church officials
 - Padres' home
 - Curve
 - Bishopric
 - Boat loop
 - Willing response
 - Not fooled
 - Andas country
 - The Bard's river
 - "The Glass Key" star
 - Black bird
 - Instructed
 - Feudal farm workers
 - Letter opener
 - "Butterfield 8" author
 - Door section
 - Work on leather
 - Ghostly sound
 - Savage
 - Painter
 - Naiman
 - Sialom curves
 - Conger chasers
 - Second-story man
 - No gentleman ha
 - Casey Jones, e.g.
 - Required
 - Doctor or shaman
 - Papal cape
 - Ump's relative
 - Farm implement
 - Vietnam
 - Incarinate
 - Ready for a tie-breaker
 - Novelist
 - George
 - Teaching method
 - L-O-N-G times
 - Mild oath
 - Cashew
 - B-F connection

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE:

FLIP OGAM ALLIAR
AURA VOLE PAORE
CRADLE OF THE DEEP
TENSOR TEX ANA
STROLL PLAY
CARAT HUELVA
OLOR SET MILLIE
LANOSCAPEARTIST
SISERA OWN ERIC
BATTUE CRASH
LAPS MERRIE
IRA JAN CRUSOE
ATRCOMITIONING
NIGEN EOAN OACE
ALENE RUNG OMER

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN AND OMAR SHARIF

TIME AND TIDE WON'T WAIT

Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
 ♠ A J 5 3
 ♥ A 7 5 3
 ♦ Q
 ♣ A Q 6 3

EAST
 ♠ Q 10 8 2
 ♥ J
 ♦ 6 5 4
 ♣ J 10 9 7 5

SOUTH
 ♠ K 7 6
 ♥ K 6 2
 ♦ K 10 9 8 7 2
 ♣ K

The bidding:
 North East South West
 1 ♠ Pass 1 ♣ Pass
 1 ♥ Pass 2 NT Pass
 3 NT Pass Pass Pass
 Opening lead: Ten of ♠

In bridge, as in chess, time can be critically important. Lose a tempo and a winning position can deteriorate rapidly. Any inclination North might have had toward slam cooled after South's first two bids. The fact there was no eight-card fit available made the possibility of 12 tricks remote, so North settled for game in no trump, thinking it would prove child's play.

West led the top of the interior heart sequence and declarer made a

shrewd move by allowing East's jack to hold. When a club came back, declarer was a tempo ahead in the game—North-South retained at least two stoppers in every suit and there were only two cards to be forced out in the long suit.

Declarer continued with a low diamond, West followed low and dummy's queen won, but declarer had squandered his advantage. South now needed three entries to hand to establish and run the diamond suit, but only two were available. No matter how declarer squirmed, there was no way to fulfill the contract when the defenders made no mistakes.

Since declarer, to all intents and purposes, would have to lose two diamond tricks, the spots in the suit should have been used to better advantage. At trick three South should have led the king of diamonds from hand, smothering the table's queen and the defenders would have been forced to concede. A holdup would have been useless, for declarer would simply have continued with the ten.

Once the defenders took one of their diamond tricks, declarer would still have an entry to hand with a major-suit king to force out the remaining diamond stopper and another to run the winning tricks in the suit, thus taking 10 tricks in all.



"Thirty-five thousand feet, one way."

YOUR STARS



Aries
 March 21 - April 19
 Something you thought had already been done still remains to be done so that time is at a premium. Something will happen that can easily be used to boost your spirits. Complacency and smugness are to be combatted. Be tactful.



Cancer
 June 21 - July 20
 You will need all the energy you can summon to avoid dissipating any of it. You must take the best possible care of your health. Do not delay, if you do you will miss a good opportunity. Be polite.



Libra
 Sept. 23 - Oct. 22
 If you accept another's hospitality make sure you show you are grateful. You should try to avoid gloomy thoughts, instead dwell on the bright side. Even though you feared the worst, it will not happen. Be tolerant.



Capricorn
 Dec. 21 - Jan. 19
 You will tend to be rather on the nervous side and should do all you can to calm yourself. Something you have been seeking to learn some time will now come home to you. You would be wrong to take too much for granted. Be frank.



Taurus
 April 21 - May 20
 Not everything is the way you would like it to be. Never mind, what is could have been much worse. Your lucky numbers are 18 and 24. Do not do anything that your partner would find objectionable. Be moderate.



Leo
 July 21 - Aug. 21
 You should avoid exposing yourself to infection, but do not become too obsessed by it. Make sure you do not eat any food that is on the stale side. Try to avoid excessive noise, and do not yourself make noise. Be helpful.



Scorpio
 Oct. 23 - Nov. 22
 You should not be too quick to trust someone you do not know very well. Avoid eating too many sweet or fatty things. You will get some welcome support and encouragement from a friend of yours. Be sincere.



Aquarius
 Jan. 20 - Feb. 19
 If you think you have plenty of time you do not, already for that very reason. Although at first you will be rather uncertain you will soon find something to reassure you. You should try to use a little more commonsense. Be respectful.



Gemini
 May 21 - June 20
 You have far less time than you thought you had so do not adopt a too leisurely pace. You will be able to find a workable solution to a problem that cannot be altogether solved, at least not in the short term. Avoid making promises that would be hard to keep. Be kind.



Virgo
 Aug. 23 - Sept. 22
 You will not gain any dividends by being jealous of others. Instead work hard—if you do you will reap ample benefits. Make sure you do not exceed limits of safety or propriety. Be considerate.



Sagittarius
 Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
 There will be a certain amount of confusion but if you keep your head you will be able to sort it out. There is no reason to give up hope, but it would be wrong to trust too much to luck. You should discuss matters more with your partner. Be reasonable.



Pisces
 Feb. 20 - March 20
 This is the time to make a few changes but you should consider them carefully first. You will have some good luck, but not quite in the direction where you thought you could do with it. Continue to have the courage of your convictions. Be consistent.



"Just a few more minutes because Daddy's on the night shift."



"Donald Trump's thinking of buying South America."

EVENTS

A buyers' guide to oriental carpets in Kuwait

By Diare Diaz

Nestled at the top of the Arabian Gulf, Kuwait finds itself in the midst of the world's richest rug producing region. Accordingly, handwoven textiles are readily available in this country, often — but not always — at prices far lower than would be found in Europe or the United States.

For the expatriate who hasn't grown up in a culture that teaches the value and virtue of oriental carpets from an early age, the prospect of jumping into the rug buying market — where bargaining is the key to financial survival — may prove to be intimidating. However, with the help of a few tips and plenty of time and patience, hunting for the perfect oriental rug collection in Kuwait can be both fun and rewarding without being ruinous to the pocketbook.

For the first-time buyer, and those who are simply toying with the idea of taking a piece of the Middle East home with them, buying an oriental rug may be as simple as walking into a carpet shop, picking a piece in the size and colour that fits your style, then paying the quoted price.

This is certainly one way to do it.

Rug merchants in Kuwait are the first to admit that this is rarely what happens when they sell their goods.

"No one walks in off the street and buys the first time. They look around in other stores, maybe come back three or four times, then they buy," said Ali Asghar Kaffashan, owner of Al Balushi and Kaffashan Carpet Co. in the Souk Al Watia.

And that should serve as the first clue to successful rug hunting: don't rush into anything.

In fact, before heading to the old souk, to Salmiya, to the Friday market or any other shopping spots, the best place to start looking is probably a library or bookstore. There are dozens of books and references dealing with the subject of oriental rugs.

If you're thinking of buying one of these references, beware:

the thick, glossy books are often times more expensive than some of the handwoven rugs you might want to buy. But there are a number of books for in-house use at libraries such as the British Council.

One book that may be worth purchasing is "Rugs to Riches: An Insider's Guide to Oriental Rugs" by Carolyn Bosly. It is a relatively small guide that is packed with useful information ranging from how to bargain to how to take care of your purchase.

It's also important to have some idea of what type of rug you want and how much you're willing to spend on it. There are literally hundreds of types of rugs that fall under the heading of oriental carpets. They range from bedouin tribal pieces, including those locally produced, to Persian carpets, some of which are considered the finest in the world.

Handmade rugs from the Caucasus and Turkoman areas of the Soviet Union, Afghanistan, Turkey, India, Pakistan and China fall under the "oriental rug" heading as well.

The only crucial element here is that the rugs must be handmade in order to be considered the real thing. Machine-made rugs, even if manufactured in these countries, are not considered real "oriental rugs" and do not fetch the same prices retail, or resale, as the handmade ones.

With the research done, and some idea of what you're in the market for — bedouin, kelim, Persian, silk, etc. — it's time to start shopping. There are dozens of carpet merchants in this country, though many are in out-of-the-way and hard-to-find places. If you make it to their door, most offer a warm welcome and will gladly show you samples of their stock.

The minute you step inside a shop, rug dealers and assistants will start evaluating you as a potential customer. They will try to find out how much you know, or DON'T know, about rugs. They will ask questions to determine your genuine interest and the amount of cash you're willing

to put out for a piece.

Here's your chance to evaluate carpets up close. As Carolyn Bosly says in "Rugs to Riches," there is no precise formula for analysing the "quality" of a rug, but there are a half dozen ways to determine whether a rug is of high quality, poor quality or somewhere in between.

These factors are knots per square inch, material used, design, colours, age and condition.

To figure the knot count, turn the rug over, and count the number of knots in a horizontal running inch (3 cm), then do the same for a vertical running inch. Multiply the two numbers. The result is the number of knots per square inch. It's best to do this in a number of places on the rug, since the weave may vary from section to section.

A handmade rug can have as few as 20 knots per square inch or as many as 1,000 knots and up, though most rugs fall somewhere in between. A rug made in a small village may have an average of 120 to 300 knots per square inch, while a rug made in a regular workshop may average 300 to 500 knots per square inch. Tribal rugs tend to average 90 to 150 knots.

There are five basic materials which are used in making oriental rugs. They are wool, cotton, silk, jute, and animal hair.

(The thread that is stretched lengthwise in the loom is called the "warp." It is crossed by weft threads, with the knots going in between for the weave. The fringe of a rug is the exposed portion of its warp. Thus it is simple to tell whether the warp is silk, cotton, jute, etc.)

A rug with a silk pile on a silk warp is considered top of the line, and likewise fetches top of the line prices. The Kuwait market is seemingly flooded with silk rugs this year, and most of them are very fine Persian pieces made in the city of Qum. Turkish Herkeke rugs are also in good supply here.

Wool rugs can vary from very good to very poor quality depending on the type of wool used. Kurk wool is considered the finest grade and can cost as much as a pure silk. The wool is short



from lambs who are just eight to 13 months old, and who graze in high mountain districts.

Kurk wool rugs average 450 knots per square inch and up. The wool is often used in conjunction with silk warp threads, as in many Persian Esfahan rugs. Very frequently the design itself is inlaid with silk, increasing the rug's quality and value.

Regular wool rugs, which are not as soft and silky feeling as their Kurk wool counterparts, are most commonly found on a cotton warp. Silk inlay is also widely used on this type of rug, primarily in Persian pieces.

Bad wool is something to be avoided at all costs. The poorest quality, referred to as tabachi, or "dead wool," is taken from dead sheep. The dead wool feels brittle and may actually break when stroked. Good wool feels very springy.

One way to test the quality of the wool is to rub it vigorously with your hand in the direction of the pile. After removing any fluff that comes off initially, continue stroking the rug in the same direction. Good wool will sel-

dom fluff twice. Persian short pile rugs hardly fluff at all.

If the same amount of wool fluffs up after repeating the process a third time, chances are it is dead wool bought cheaply from a slaughterhouse.

Analysing a rug's design is not as clear cut as determining the quality of the wool. Remember that handmade rugs will never be as uniform as machine-made rugs and they are not supposed to be. In fact, one way to tell whether a rug is handmade is to look for minor discrepancies in the pattern. No two birds will be exactly alike. Rows of flowers may not be identical. These are not indications of poor quality.

Injudging designs, look for the amount of background that has been left undecorated. Also notice the intricacy of the design and the precision with which it has been drawn.

The more space that is covered by detail and design, the better. Rugs with large, undecorated fields do not rate as high as rugs which are jammed with detail.

This does not necessarily mean that a rug with an undecorated

field is not of good quality. Many of the finest Persian silks are made with a central design on an empty field with decorated borders. However, another Persian silk of similar quality but with a finely detailed design would unquestionably cost more and ultimately be worth more if you decided to sell it later.

If the design of a rug has the overall effect of being lopsided or crooked, it automatically drops in value no matter how finely detailed it is.

When judging the colour of the rug it is best to count colour "tones" rather than just colour. There are often various shades of blues, greens, reds, etc., and they should each be counted as different colour tones.

A rug with nine or more distinct colour tones which are blended so that no single colour tone stands out, can be considered the top of the line.

Oriental rugs are colour combinations that seem unlikely. Many of the colour tones, in isolation, would clash with one another. Yet part of the rug's charm is that the weavers are able

to blend these various tones with absolute perfection so that they have a very subtle and often breathtaking effect.

Most oriental rugs have an average of six separate colour tones. The more the better, as long as the colours are used in combinations that work. A rug with clashing colours, or with colours that are shocking and stand out is not considered good quality.

The age of a rug is extremely difficult to judge. Unless you're an antique expert, it is unlikely that you'll be able to determine a rug's age simply by examining it. If you're shopping for old, semi-antique or antique rugs, you need to find a dealer you can really trust, or a knowledgeable friend or broker who can help you.

A rug's condition is fairly easy to see. All new rugs should be in perfect condition with fringes and borders present. The rug should be clean and free of any stains from bleeding colours.

A simple way of testing whether the colours will bleed is to wet a small corner of a white handkerchief or tissue with spit or water and dab it against each of the rug's colours. If no dye comes off, the dye will probably not run. If a small amount comes off, test the colour again. If it continues to bleed onto the tissue, it will likely bleed into the rug's other colours whenever it gets wet. That means even a simple water spill could spoil the rug. Make sure all of the colours are fast.

With these pointers on what to look for in an oriental rug, you have a basis of bargaining power. The key is to use it.

Whether you like it or not, bargaining is part of the local culture. If you don't like bargaining, you can always pay the quoted price. However, if you want to give it a try, here are some tips on how to do it.

Expect success: attitude is key. If you go into a bargaining situation with great expectations, you're likely to have more success than if you go in with the attitude that the merchant will never agree to your price.

For example, if a rug is being quoted at KD 1,000, you might

offer KD 600. Most likely the dealer will not agree to that price but now you have a bargaining range of KD 400. If you start with a counter offer of KD 900, the merchant still might not agree to that price, but the bargaining range in this situation is only KD 100.

Keep in mind that the rug dealer will never lose money on a carpet. Unlike other consumer goods, such as appliances and electronic items, rugs do not lose their value with age, they appreciate. In the bargaining game it simply boils down to how much profit the merchant will make.

Beware of quick settlements: a dealer might try to rush the sale or control the speed of the bargaining by using ploys, such as saying, "there's not another one like it and another customer is coming back for it this evening." He might ask KD 1,000. You get nervous and counter with KD 900. The dealer sees your impatience, sticks to his KD 950 and you agree. The deal is sealed and the outcome is probably extreme.

Take your time, and let the merchant invest time in you as a customer. Let him tell you about the rug in question. Let him compare it to others to show you how good it is. Let him give you a much information as he wants. All of this can only be to your advantage.

Don't be afraid to walk away. Many times a rug dealer will call you back and try to re-open the bargaining. You can accept and try to come to a suitable price, or you can leave the deal on the table. You can always go back to the shop another time or continue shopping and buy elsewhere.

In the end, how well you do in bargaining will depend on how much you're willing to pay for it. If you take the time to survey a number of rugs, compare prices and learn about the types of carpets you want to buy, you'll undoubtedly do better than the average tourist who walks in and settles quickly on something that catches his fancy.

Remember, a rug is only worth what you're willing to pay.

TELEVISION PROGRAMME

KTV 1

MORNING

9.30 The Opening and Holy Quran

9.40 Sabah Al Kher news

9.50 Cartoon series

10.15 Magazine D'Actualite (repetition)

10.30 Varieties

10.45 Cultural film

11.15 Sabah Al Kher news

11.20 Wadan Zaman Al Sami: Arabic serial (final part)

12.15 Al Malqouf: Local serial (final part)

12.35 Sabah Al Kher news

12.40 News Summary

12.45 Holy Quran and Closedown

EVENING

4.00 The Opening and Holy Quran

4.15 The World Today via Satellite (repetition)

4.45 Cartoons

5.15 Mama Anisa and Children: Local children programme, prepared by Samiya Mohammed and presented by Mama Anisa

5.45 Night chemists, Airlines and Official advertisements

6.00 Cultural film

7.00 Varieties

7.15 Holy Quran and Science: Religious programme, prepared and presented by Ibrahim

8.00 Cultural serial

8.30 Good Evening and local news

9.00 News in Arabic

9.45 Onsiyat Al Eithneen: Local weekly programme, prepared and presented by Mohammed Al Barjes

KTV 2

10.15 Lil Adala Wajh Akhar: daily Arabic serial (final part)

11.15 Variety Programme

12.15 News Summary

12.20 The World Today via Satellite

12.45 Holy Quran and Closedown

KTV 2

6.00 Opening announcement and Holy Quran

6.10 Winnie The Pooh: A cartoon series for Children

6.30 Wild South "Swan Lake": A look at Swans and legends told about white and black coloured Swans

7.00 Roving Report: A weekly round-up of local, Arab and international news

7.30 Trap: "The Bonsai"

8.00 News in English

8.30 Around the World: A variety of topics and events from all over the world...

9.00 Tour of Duty: "Hard Stripes". Goldman, suspecting he and his men have been used by CIA agent, Jim Dayle.

10.00 Homerom: The teacher's mother comes to visit her son. He has to teach his younger brother a lesson...

10.30 A Classical Movie: They Died with their Boots on. Starring: Errol Flynn, Olivia de Havilland. Based on General Custer's last stand against chief Sitting Bull. Events leading up to the Battle of Little Big Horn.

12.00 News in Brief

12.15 Magazine D'Actualite

CINEMA

Al Andalus Arabic film

Al Sahmiah Al Sahmiah

The Wild Pair Al Hamra

Arabic film

Drive-In Arabic film

Al Firdous Hisaab Khon Ka

Fahaeel Open Do Musafir

Fahaeel The Hindenburg

Al Jahra January Man

Granada Distant Thunder

Sulaibikhat Iron Angels

Jleeb Shahi Khandan

Ahmadi Drive-In The Ultimate Ninja

NIGHT CHEMIST

Kuwait Snaab Ph.

Fahd Al Salem St.

Ibn Rushd Ph.

Duail Market

Hawalli & Nagra Al Khayam Ph.

Beirut St.

Salmiya Al Rashid Ph.

Amman St.

Fahaeel Abu Halifa Ph.

Coastal Rd.

Farwaniya Al Taawon Ph.

Main St.

Jahra Al Abraj Ph.

Dubli Al Khuzaei St.

WHAT'S ON

ARTS

Sultan Gallery

INDIAN artist Shamima Farid is showing a collection of her latest works at the Sultan Gallery, near Rolls Royce showroom. A wide selection of subjects are featured in the paintings of the artist, who has exhibited widely in Kuwait and overseas. However, this is Shamima's first solo-exhibition in Kuwait. Open daily from 9 am to 1 pm and 4 to 8 pm.

Bits n' Pieces

An interesting 8 week course in patchwork and quilting techniques. For details contact Tel. 5634663.

SOCIAL

Summer Affair '90

THE Weekend Club will host their traditional "Summer Affair" on the first day of Eid Al Fitr (April 26) at the Regency Palace Hotel. Watch or participate in the selection and crowning of the 1990 Summer Queen, join in a Live Concert, watch a scintillating display of "Lambada" or simply let your feet loose to the music of Top Ranks and Perfect Strangers. Gala buffet, loads of prizes and most important have a good time. For reservations call 4315425 (Julio), 5741380 or 4890566.

Rose Ferns drama

MAY 10-11. Expatriates Club proudly announces that Goa's celebrated king of century shows Rose Ferns, and his sixteen member troupe, will present at the Granada Cinema hall, Kheitan, his premier release in Kuwait "Xinx" (Broken Glass) and "Beiman Tum" (You Ungrateful) which has already crossed the hundred plus mark in Goa. More details later.

Flag Hoisting

A FLAG-HOISTING ceremony will be held at the Bangladesh embassy, Khalidiya, on Monday, March 26, at 9.00 am on the occasion of the Bangladesh Independence and National Day. The Bangladesh Ambassador, K.M. Shehabuddin will raise the flag. All Bangladeshis are cordially invited.

Guardian Angel Club

The Guardian Angel Club take great pleasure in announcing their Konkani drama entitled "Ostorocho Mog" (Woman's Love) directed by Rennie J. Colaco, on June 8, 1990, at the IAC, Goan Charlie Chaplin - Jancito Vaz, Ophelia, H. Britton and Sebh Coutinho are among the other well known Goan cast.

Narmada's Malayalam play

NARMADA Theatres will be staging a social Malayalam play, A Love Mantra From Ujjain, at Indian Arts Circle auditorium, Funatees on Friday, May 11, 1990 at 6.30 pm. Written by Varghese Paul, lyrics by Rajendra Babu, music by Antony Joseph, the play is co-directed by Sherry John and directed by Jayan Pattathu. Various characters are being represented by popular stage artists among the Malayalee community in Kuwait.

Ladies International League

LIL's Summer Bazaar is now being held at the Kuwait Regency Palace Hotel in the exhibition hall on Friday, May 11 from 10 am to 6 pm. Vendors' first meeting at Regency Palace in Nabila Room from 5 pm to 7 pm on March 26. All inquiries contact Celina on 3434946 or Barbara on 5325131.

PAC's Silver Jubilee

The organising committee of the Pakistan Arts Circle will celebrate PAC's Silver Jubilee on Thursday, the 27th April, 1990 at 9 pm. The programme will include variety of programme and "Sham-e-Ghazal". Our earlier artist will present his wonderful performance, and is being invited from Pakistan.

Reservations are open to all families. All are kindly requested to book their seats well before 15th April, 1990. For further details, please contact Hamid Mahmood, Public Relations Secretary, Hyderabad.

The Committee for Celebrations of 400-year Anniversary of Hyderabad (DECCEN)

invites essays in either Urdu, Telugu or English languages in not less than 1000 words on one of the following topics: 1. Quli Qutub Shah — the Architect of Hyderabad. 2. Contribution of Nawab Mir Osman Ali Khan towards modern Hyderabad. 3. Hyderabad City as I saw her (for school students only).

The competition is open to all present and former Hyderabadis and their children residing in Kuwait.

A panel of judges will judge the first, second and third prize winning entries, and the prizes and citations will be distributed before the audience at 400-year anniversary celebrations to be held sometime in May 1990.

All entries must be neatly written or typed on A4 size paper in double space, and reach the committee on or before April 30, 1990 and addressed to the Convenor Literary Committee, PO Box 23343, Safat, 13094, Kuwait. No entry fee is charged.

Holy Week 1990

Holy Family Cathedral — Kuwait

Palm and Passion Sunday: 5th April — 7.30 am, Holy Mass (English); 5.25 pm, Holy Mass (Konkani); 4.30 pm, Holy Mass (Konkani); 5.45 pm, Holy Mass (English); 7.55 pm, Holy Mass (English).

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday of the Holy Week: 9th, 10th, 11th April — 7.15 am, Holy Mass (English); 6.00 pm to 8.30 pm, Confession; 6.30 pm, Holy Mass (English); 7.00 pm, Holy Mass & Retreat (Malayalam — in big hall).

Maundy Thursday: 12th April — 7.00 am, Concelebrated Mass of Christ (English); 4.00 pm, Holy Mass (Konkani); 5.30 pm, Solemn Holy Mass of the Lord's Supper (English); 9.00 pm, Adoration (English — in the big hall).

Good Friday: 13th April (Day of fast and abstinence) — 7.00 am, Celebration of the Lord's Passion (Malayalam); 9.00 am, Celebration of the Lord's Passion (English); 2.30 pm, Celebration of the Lord's Passion (Konkani); 4.00 pm, Celebration of the Lord's Passion (English); 5.30 pm, Celebration of the Lord's Passion (English).

Holy Saturday: 14th April — 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm Confessions; 8.00 pm, Easter Vigil Mass (English).

Easter Sunday: 15th April — 7.00 am, Holy Mass (English); 9.00 am, Holy Mass (English); 10.00 am, Holy Mass (English); 11.00 am, Holy Mass (English); 11.30 am, Holy Mass (French in big hall); 12.00 noon, Holy Mass (English); 4.00 pm, Holy Mass (Konkani); 5.00 pm, Holy Mass (English); 6.00 pm, Holy Mass (English); 7.00 pm, Holy Mass (Malayalam in big hall).

German-speaking Cultural Association

THE forthcoming annual election will take place on Monday, March 26, 1990, 8 pm, at Kuwait International Hotel, Ahmadi Room. All ladies and gentlemen of the German-speaking community are requested to attend.

British Council

The British Council working hours during the Holy month of Ramadan: General office — Saturday to Wednesday — 7.30 to 14.00; Library — Saturday to Wednesday — 9.00 to 12.30, 16.00 to 19.00; Thursday: 9.00 to 1.20.

Konkani non-stop show

A Konkani non-stop show entitled Koxi Ani Sontos (Hardships & Happiness), written and directed by Epa de Utorada, organised by Utorada Lourdes Boys will be staged on

July 6, 1990 at 3.30 pm, Vegetarian Union Hall, Maidan Hawalli.

For more information contact 4817857.

HOLIDAYS

Holiday Inn

AL AHMADI COFFEE SHOP: An ideal venue for that business lunch or a relaxing dinner. Michael and Delaine, our duo sing for you every evening from 8 pm till midnight. Choose from our lavish international buffet and then sit back and enjoy the Holiday Inn's excellent service. Why not treat yourself to our value for money. Breakfast buffet you can always work off those excess calories at the Apollo Fitness Centre.

CLUB ANDALUS SUPPER

CLUB: Spending your Thursday night Arabic style. Savour our exotic Oriental and international food. Relax to the musical entertainment provided by our resident Arabic band. Come and enjoy — you deserve it.

Friday family lunch: A great treat for the whole family. Prizes and surprises for the children with Disney characters and our amazing magician. A sumptuous Oriental and international buffet complemented by the sounds of our resident band, makes this a day to look forward. See you all...

Messiah Beach Hotel

Messiah Beach Hotel is promoting an evening of seafood specialties every Wednesday evening at 7 pm in Al Mubarakiah Restaurant.

BUSINESS & FINANCE

Opec switches meeting to Geneva

Producers ponder oil investments

MUSCAT, March 25. (Reuters): Opec's next key ministerial meeting in May will be held in Geneva instead of Vienna. Opec Secretary General Subroto said today.

Subroto, asked by reporters at an Opec non-Opec meeting in Muscat if the May meeting would be in Geneva, said "yes." He gave no reason for the switch.

But some delegates at the Muscat meeting said it was prompted by Austria's response to Iraq's execution of London-based journalist Farzad Bazof earlier this month.

Opec's mid-year ministerial conference on May 25 will set out levels for the rest of the year. Opec headquarters are in Vienna.

For years dominated by questions of price and quotas, oil producers facing demand for huge future investment are now grappling with issues ranging from growing environmental pressures to the world's ageing tanker fleet.

Immediately ahead of them is a forecast need to raise their production capacity.

Subroto estimates this will cost \$60 billion.

Squeezed between the projected growth in demand in the next decade, growing environmental concerns, and financial strain from the past, Opec and independent oil producers spent the weekend in Oman analysing the fundamental questions facing the industry.

Officials from 25 oil states, which produce eight of every 10 barrels of oil produced, also discussed the elusive issue of "price stability."

"The main theme of the meeting was what is the best way of achieving stability in the oil market," Salem Muhammed Shaban, undersecretary of Oman's Petroleum Ministry said yesterday.

The meeting between 13 Opec members and 12 independent oil producing and exporting countries (Ipec) was organised by small non-Opec Oman, de-facto leader of the independent group.

Their first meeting in 1988 resulted a year later in some non-Opec states agree-

ing to cut exports by five per cent in the second quarter of 1989 to help Opec's efforts to support prices.

Production in non-Opec countries is expected to drop or remain steady in the next 10 years, while Opec plans to raise output considerably to meet the projected one to two per cent increase in demand.

Opec sources estimate the Western world's oil demand will reach 55 million barrels per day (bpd) by 1995 from around 52 million now. It will then grow another three to four million bpd between 1995-2000.

Opec and non-Opec experts during their two-day meeting which began yesterday studied the following problems awaiting procedure in the next 10 years.

■ Where will the money come from to finance new investments to boost oil production capacity?

■ How can prices be kept at a level to stimulate consumer demand, while making reasonable profit at home.

■ How much of the world's energy

requirements be met by other sources of energy.

■ Is it worth spending money on expensive new techniques to recover more barrels in mature oil fields.

■ What will it cost to maintain existing oil facilities, refineries, export terminals and the world's ageing tanker fleet.

■ Will environmental pressures in Western countries lower oil and gas demand and push production and exportation costs up.

"One of the future issues will be to create a bridge between oil producer and consumer countries," Shaban said. "I am investing. I give some security for oil supply. I need some security for oil demand."

Another major topic discussed, based on a paper prepared by Mexico, was pricing mechanisms in the market, which link most oil prices to a few benchmark crudes.

Most producers criticise the current system because the quantity of the key crudes involved is getting smaller or is easy to manipulate, delegates said.

Fed holding US rate policy steady

Monetary stance to be reviewed

WASHINGTON, March 25. (Reuters): Federal Reserve executives will meet this week to determine the course of American monetary policy, but recent economic data suggest they will be in no position to change US interest rates.

Although the danger of recession has eased, the economy remains vulnerable. That, coupled with an underlying inflation rate of 4.5 per cent, will make Fed policy-makers reluctant to change course, economists said.

The policy-making Federal Open Market Committee, comprised of seven Fed board members and five regional bank presidents, is scheduled to meet on Tuesday to discuss the US economy and interest rates.

"I think they are going to sit tight until they see more evidence about which way the economy is going," said Lawrence Chimere, senior economist with the Wafa Group.

The latest survey by federal reserve regional banks said the economy was expanding at a slow pace but the motor industry was vulnerable. However, a rebound in car sales last month helped push orders for durable goods up by 3.3 per cent in February after a 10.7 per cent fall in January.

Economists said the numbers show that the manufacturing sector, although sluggish, was not deteriorating.

The Fed, America's central bank, last adjusted policy in mid-December, lowering the key federal

funds rate, the interest banks charge each other for overnight loans, to around 8.25 per cent.

The central bank had been following a course of gradually reducing interest rates since last March when the federal funds rate stood at around 9.75 per cent.

Some economists believe that with the economy showing signs of gathering strength after a weak fourth quarter, the Fed's next move might be to tighten credit.

If GNP, which grew by a 0.9 per cent annual rate in the fourth quarter of 1989, accelerates above two per cent, the central bank may raise rates to slow growth to a non-inflationary level.

"I don't think you will see any easing in the near term based on the data we have right now," Martin Regalia, research director at the National Council of Savings Institutions, said.

The latest government reports show that job growth in February was robust and retail sales were healthy. Housing construction, although down from January's extraordinary rate, were stronger than expected last month.

So far this year, inflation appears to be moving up to a 9.9 per cent annual rate. Excluding food and energy, the inflation rate is at 4.5 per cent, a level Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan said is too high.

But few economists see the Fed bringing that underlying rate of inflation down soon.

Sichuan seeks own economic path

CHENGDU, China, March 25. (Reuters): In the old days in China, the farther away the emperor, the more freedom for a province.

Sichuan, landlocked in China's remote southwest, illustrates that maxim today as it attempts to go its own way on economic policy. The province's 110 million people make up a tenth of China's entire population.

When Beijing ordered an austerity programme in September 1988 that called for the closure of thousands of rural enterprises, the Sichuanese did not follow blindly.

"In Sichuan we're closing very few of them," said Zhao Wenxin, a local Communist Party official in charge of rural economic policy.

Some 100,000 Sichuanese workers were dismissed last year when rural enterprises closed, according to the official China Daily. A Western diplomat said the figure was small compared to the millions of jobs lost from firms closed elsewhere in China.

The austerity drive, aimed at slowing economic growth and runaway inflation, has targeted entrepreneurial rural companies for closure. The reasons given were shoddy

products, inefficiency and rampant tax evasion.

Party official Zhao said Sichuan did not want to add a new army of jobless factory workers to its already huge number of unemployed farmers. The province has a total of about 15 million jobless, the China Daily said.

Vice-governor Jin Hongsheng told journalists that the provincial government was ready to offer financial aid to endangered rural enterprises.

"If they are legally run, we will support them," Jin said. "The Western diplomat said he thought this independent stance was typical of the hard-headed, pragmatic Sichuanese character."

Zhao and his colleagues here provide reasons to Beijing for not keeping in step.

"We need our rural enterprises to absorb the excess farm labour we already are saddled with," Zhao said.

The provincial capital Chengdu swarms with unemployed farm workers, many in rags, roaming the streets in search of jobs. "This is a potential source of instability—a very big problem for us," said Zhao.

Dubai bids for more distribution business

Major marketing drive

DUBAI is launching a major marketing drive to boost its growing reputation as an international distribution centre.

The initial thrust of the programme will be unveiled at Eurofreight Brussels—the continent's largest international exhibition of freight, trade, transport and distribution—which takes place next month.

Under the banner of the Dubai Commerce and Tourism Promotion Board, an eight-strong delegation is taking part in the three-day event to be held at the Brussels International Conference and Exhibition Centre on April 9-11.

The delegation, the first overseas commerce mission to be launched by the Board, will mount a comprehensive exhibit at the fair. This will bring together the Port Rashid Authority, Jebel Ali Port Corporation, Emirates Sky Cargo, Swift Freight International, Gulf Express Freight, MMI, Barber Dubai Shipping and Emirates National Shipping.

"Previously, Dubai's ports, and other organisations in the transport sector, promoted their own services on an individual basis. One of the major contributions that our Board can make is to co-ordinate this promotional effort. At Eurofreight, Dubai should make a very strong, united impact," said the Board's deputy chief executive Patrick Macdonald. "A major point will be to emphasise our leadership role in sea-air trade between the Far East and Europe."

"The Port Rashid Authority had already decided to go to Eurofreight and the Board decided to join it to increase the size of the stand. We informed other major companies and were delighted by their response."

"Dubai's one of the fastest growing distribution and freight centres in the world. Last year total cargo traffic via the city grew by an impressive 51 per cent on the previous year. We aim to highlight its strategic location, extensive sea and air links, efficient ports and transport infrastructure, and low cost storage and shipping facilities," said Macdonald.

Dubai's claim as an international distribution centre was given a further boost this month when Citizen Watches of Japan, the world's largest watch producer since 1986, inaugurated a new 2,000 square metre distribution facility for the Middle East in the Jebel Ali Free Zone. It is the ninth Japanese company to open a distribution facility within the zone over the past two years.

"Companies from the Far East are becoming increasingly interested in Dubai because it is halfway to the consumer markets of Europe. In addition, the opening up of the Eastern bloc markets offers great potential, and, with eight Eastern European airlines now flying out of Dubai, the city has great freight advantages," said Macdonald.



Indian tourism meeting

R.A. Stanslaus, the new asst. director of India Tourist Office in Dubai along with D. Subash, tourist promotion officer based in Bahrain visited Kuwait on March 19. P.R. Kanga, manager, Air India has introduced them to the tour operators and travel agents at a dinner party at Holiday Inn. Kanga and the India tourism officials addressed the audience and gave the details of tourism facilities in India and new destinations attractive to the tourists from the Middle East. (Picture shows from left to right D. Subash, R.A. Stanslaus and P.R. Kanga).

Oil prices surge

NEW YORK, March 25. (UPI): Nervousness over the situation in Lithuania, weekend profit taking and a Monday meeting of refiners in San Antonio combined on Friday to drive up oil prices. May delivery contracts for the US benchmark West Texas Intermediate crude jumped 39 cents to end the day on the New York Mercantile Exchange at \$20.39 a barrel, a mere penny higher than a week ago.

WTI zoomed 65 cents to \$20.40 a barrel on the US Gulf Coast cash market. Prices fell in the early part of the week after the 13-member Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries failed to limit overproduction by quota cheaters that, in the view of some traders, has dumped excess crude on the world market.

Unleaded gasoline for April delivery rose 0.28 cent to 57.66 cents a gallon, a gain of 0.70 cent on the week, while the May delivery contract accelerated 1.56 cents to 63.54 cents a gallon, up 1.97 cents on the week.

On the New York harbour cash market, unleaded gasoline for March delivery remained steady at 56.30 cents a gallon. The New York harbour spot market also traded April delivery gasoline at 62.80 cents a gallon, up 1.8 cents. The price is higher because the gasoline has a lower vapour pressure to meet the May 1 cleaner-air deadline set by northeast states.

The Friday rally started with traders taking profits on short positions previously taken in anticipation of the recent drop in prices.

Many traders also were straightening out their books because they planned to attend next week's meeting in San Antonio of the National Petroleum Refiners' Association.

"There was short-covering before the weekend and nervousness over the Lithuanian situation," said Kirk Kinnear of the Phibro Division of Salomon Brothers, Greenwich, Connecticut.

"Anytime there's political uncertainty, people don't want to be short oil," the analyst said.

The Soviet KGB and Interior Ministry rushed military detachments to Lithuania on Friday as the rebellious republic's parliament speeded up formation of a new government with a showdown appearing imminent with Moscow over its demand for independence.

White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said the US embassy in Moscow had been informed that two American diplomats in Vilnius, the Lithuanian capital, were "ordered to depart in 12 hours." There was no immediate Soviet comment on the expulsions.

The advance on the Merc gained momentum as crude moved up through the \$20.20 a-barrel resistance level, triggering buy orders.

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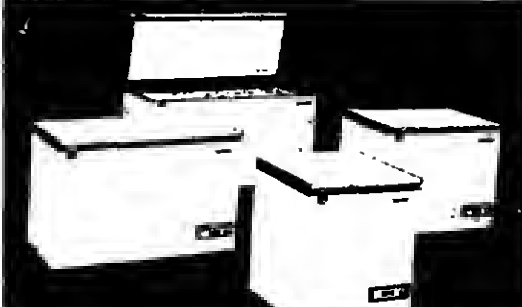
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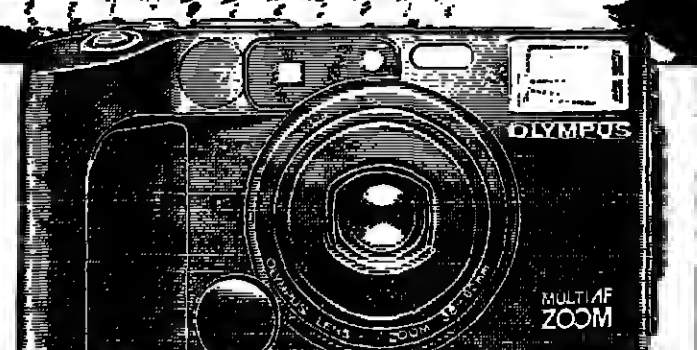
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The week in business

Economy weaker, inflation higher than expected

New orders for durable goods edge up

NEW YORK, March 25, (UPI): The nation's economy appeared weaker than anticipated this week and there may be little relief in the form of lower interest rates with inflation running higher than expected.

The week also saw heavy activity on the foreign front with the Soviets agreeing to buy US grain in a five-year deal worth about \$6 billion, the Japanese buying a majority stake in the corporate parent of the 7-Eleven Convenience-Store chain and Texas Instruments and Kobe Steel establishing a joint semiconductor venture.

The US Commerce Department reported Friday that, excluding military-related items, new orders for durable goods edged up only 2.2 per cent in February on strong demand for motor vehicles.

"The private economy looks pretty weak," said economist David Wyss of Dry/McGraw Hill in Lexington, Mass. "The (3.3 per cent) rise in February was mainly defence orders, as well as a rebound in motor vehicle orders."

February orders for durable goods totalled \$121.5 billion after falling 10.7

per cent in January to a revised \$117.6 billion, the department said.

Orders for non-defence capital goods, a category closely watched by professional investors, fell 5.7 per cent in February to \$36.1 billion — after a 13.7 per cent January plunge.

Also, Friday's news from Detroit was not good. Vehicle sales of US manufacturers in the most recent 10-day sales period fell 9.5 per cent from last year's level.

Sales of domestically built cars alone during the March 11-20 period skidded 8.9 per cent, indicating the spring selling season will be late in blooming. Light truck sales moved 10.6 per cent lower.

The annual sales rate for domestically built cars — the most common measure of industry performance — was a weak 6 million cars during the period, against 6.8 million last year.

The glacial pace of showroom traffic during the last 30 days has prompted some carmakers to once again jumpstart sales by brushing off their evergreen incentive programmes.

There was bad economic news Tues-

day, when the Labour Department reported inflation at the consumer level rose 0.5 per cent in February. Higher clothing prices more than offset a 0.7 per cent drop in energy rates. The CPI rise followed January's 1.1 per cent gain.

Excluding often volatile food and energy prices, the core rate of inflation at the consumer level also rose 0.5 per cent in February, the department said. For the past 12 months, consumer prices have gained 5.3 per cent.

Many economists had expected a much smaller rise in consumer inflation and were troubled by the report. The higher-than-expected inflation report should also make it more difficult for the Federal Reserve to lower interest rates, economists said.

The Commerce Department reported Tuesday that America's merchandise trade deficit shot up by 20.5 per cent in January to \$9.25 billion, boosted by a jump in petroleum imports.

The January deficit was an increase of \$1.6 billion over December, the Commerce Department said. Private economists had expected a deficit of

between \$9 billion and \$9.6 billion for January.

"The weather was a factor," said Irwin Kellner, chief economist with Manufacturers Hanover in New York. "We imported a lot of petroleum to make up for what we drew down in December, when we had the cold weather."

Norman Robertson, chief economist for Mellon Bank in Pittsburgh, said the expanding petroleum imports are "going to emerge as a major problem" for the United States in the 1990s.

On the world's money markets, however, the dollar hit its highest levels in 31/2 years against the yen, propelled higher as investors fled the crumbling Tokyo stock market.

The US dollar also gained against the British pound as the Conservative government failed to convince financial markets with its 1990 budget and faced defeat in a provincial election seen as a key test of popularity. The German mark also slipped amid fears of Soviet intervention in Lithuania.

On Thursday, the United States and

Soviet Union agreed on terms for a five-year purchase of US grain agreement that could be worth \$6 billion.

The agreement in principle would be the fourth in the series of agreements and "represents a welcome advance" in US-Soviet relations, the Bush administration said.

Agriculture Secretary Clayton Yeutter said only a few technical issues remained. "It's almost a done deal."

In Dallas, Southland Corp, parent of the 7,000 7-Eleven Convenience Stores, said the Japanese company Ito-Yokado Co. Ltd. would buy the chain for the first major Japanese entry into US retailing.

If the announced deal is completed, the Japanese company will invest \$400 million in Southland — loaded with junk-bond debt — in return for 75 per cent of Southland's stock.

Southland had been taken private by its owners in 1987 in order to prevent any unwanted takeovers.

In Tokyo, Japanese steelmaker Kobe Steel Ltd announced Monday it had agreed with Texas Instruments

Inc. of the United States on a joint venture to make advanced semiconductor in Japan for an estimated \$350 million.

The companies said Kobe will own a majority stake in the venture but that Texas Instruments has an option to increase its ownership in the future.

On the domestic front, the US securities industry has reported as having had 1989 fourth-quarter losses of about \$92 million — the first quarterly loss since the stock market crash of October 1987.

Of the 350 brokerage firms holding membership in the New York Stock Exchange, only a little more than half showed a profit during the quarter. Industry giant Merrill Lynch and Co. had a record deficit of \$362 million.

USX Corp. warned shareholders in Pittsburgh Wednesday that a proposal made by investor Carl Icahn to spin off the company's steel business is "a simplistic approach to a complicated issue" and advised they vote against it.

Icahn, the company's largest shareholder with 13.3 per cent, wants the oil and steel conglomerate to separately

incorporate the United States steel division and spin off at least 80 per cent of it.

In Chicago, United Airlines' three major unions and the airline's biggest stockholder joined forces Monday to press a \$5.2 billion employee buyout of UAL Corp., parent company of the airline.

Also on Monday, the 9,000 machinists striking bankrupt Eastern Airlines Inc. were told by a company vice president in New York that they would not be able to return to their jobs even if they ended their strike because no openings currently exist.

"We've rebuilt the ranks ... so there's no (openings) today right now for them to go to," said George Brennan, Eastern's vice-president of marketing.

He noted the airline would be obliged to take back returning strikers as openings occur.

"Unfortunately, that's the case for many of the pilots even though their strike ended back in November. Until openings occur, they can't come back," Brennan added.

S. Arabia relaxes ban on UAE re-exports

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates, March 25, (AP): Saudi Arabia has temporarily relaxed a ban which threatened a re-export trade worth \$300 million a year from the United Arab Emirates, UAE Finance and industry officials said today.

The officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the Saudi decision was a goodwill gesture pending official talks with the UAE officials on resolving the dispute.

A three-member UAE team held talks with Saudi officials in Riyadh in preparation for wider discussions at a UAE-Saudi joint committee meeting scheduled shortly, the officials said.

The UAE shipments to Saudi Arabia were crippled at the beginning of March, when the Saudi customs authorities began applying new rulings of the Saudi Ministry of Finance and National Economy.

These restricted imports from the UAE if unaccompanied by a copy of the original certificate of origin.

The reason for the measure was not announced, but it was apparently to determine the mark up going to UAE traders. UAE traders do not provide the certificates, which disclose foreign trade contacts and original prices, traders said.

UAE re-exports to Saudi Arabia more than doubled since 1985 and were estimated at around 1.1 billion dirhams (\$300 million) in 1989, the officials said.

The amount equals 20 per cent of the country's total re-exports — mostly garments, gold, cement and manufactured goods coming from Abu Dhabi and Dubai, the two largest of seven emirates federated in the UAE.

Dubai is the Gulf's most active port and has a free trade zone that has become known as the Hong Kong of the region.

Egypt, Libya sign industrial agreement

CAIRO, March 25, (Reuters): Egypt and Libya yesterday signed an agreement to co-operate in industrial fields in a new indication of improving relations between the two former foes.

Egypt's Middle East News Agency quoted Minister of Industry Mohamed Abdel Wahab as saying the pact aimed to integrate car-making, iron and steel, electronics and energy.

Libyan Strategic Industries Minister Fathi Hamad Ben Shatan, on a four-day visit to Cairo, signed the agreement for Tripoli.

Relations between the countries, strained since the early 1970s, have improved since President Hosni Mubarak and Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi met at an Arab summit in May.

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Debt, trade disputes mount

Moscow, Poland enter a new economic era

WARSAW, March 25, (Reuters): The Soviet Union is pressing debt-ridden Poland for a quick switch to hard currency trade as the two countries enter a new economic era, but the Solidarity-led Warsaw government is reluctant to move too fast.

It fears that an abrupt switch from soft ruble trade and barter deals will expose creaking Polish industries to world-wide competition before they are ready.

Warsaw believes its 4.5 billion rubles of debt to Moscow arose from "unjust and unequal" arrangements made in the 1970s.

It says the debt should be cancelled rather than converted into hard currency as Moscow insists.

Foreign Trade Minister Marcin Swiecicki told Reuters in an interview.

The disputes, unprecedented before Poland threw off communist rule last year, were aired at tough talks in Warsaw last week on a Polish-Soviet trade agreement for 1991-95 which is intended to put their relations on a new footing.

The two countries signed a 1990 trade protocol only at the last minute after the Soviet delegation had reached Warsaw airport on their way home. But they clashed on major issues.

Swiecicki, who will lead a delegation to Moscow for more talks next month, said Warsaw

wanted a new era of hard currency and free market relations with Moscow. But it could not move too fast nor accept conversion of its rouble debt.

"Deputy Prime Minister (Stepan) Sitaran proposed effective hard currency trade from Jan 1, 1991, for everything," Swiecicki said, noting that both countries calculated that Poland would be the loser in the new relationship.

Once Soviet enterprises had to pay hard currency they would go outside Poland for better quality. Polish producers would then face world-wide competition for the Soviet market and would also

have to find new markets.

"A lot of our industries have been working only for the Soviet market and in order to make them competitive to sell on other markets we need some time," Swiecicki said.

Poland would also lose more than one billion transfer rubles in the next couple of years through the loss of existing trade advantages, he added.

Warsaw had therefore invoked a Comecon agreement, signed in Sofia in January, on compensation for member states which suffer losses in the switch to hard currency trade between them.

How to guarantee employment

Soviet transition to market economy is planned

MOSCOW, March 25, (AP): Presidential advisers are concerned that drastic proposals to speed transition to a market economy could cause widespread unemployment and force the government to implement a sweeping welfare programme, a source said yesterday.

"The main problem is how to guarantee employment and take care of the needy," said the source, who is part of the team developing the new proposal for Presidential Mikhail S. Gorbachev. "It all has to be worked out very carefully."

Despite the note of caution, the source gave no indication Gorbachev backed away from his determination to press for radical measures to wrest the already sick economy from its downward slide.

The source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the transition to a market economy may lead to a sharp increase in unemployment, which last year reached 27 per cent in some areas of the Soviet Union.

The source provided the first independent confirmation of a published report that a drastic, 17-point economic reform is being formulated following Gorbachev's accession to a new, stronger Soviet president. The report was circulated earlier this week by the Soviet Interfax news agency, an affiliate of Radio Moscow.

The package, devised by a team of economists, includes freeing prices now set by state planners without regard to costs. Any lifting of price controls is expected to bring quick and dramatic inflation.

According to Interfax, the package of proposed bills and executive orders also would involve a sell-off of many government-owned factories through stock sales to individuals and foreigners, and it would include steps to make the ruble convertible on world currency exchanges.

The source said the team working on the plan was encouraged by the example of Poland, which decided to

adopt a market system as quickly as possible to shorten the inevitably painful transition period. Soviet leaders have preferred to be more slow and careful in their economic steps.

Poland's solidarity-led government last year lifted price controls over a six-month period, which led to enormous price increases. But there are signs the initial chaotic reaction is abating.

Inflation in Poland dropped from a monthly rate of 60 to 70 per cent in January to a projected six per cent in March, once empty stores have been stocked, and the Polish zloty has been made convertible thanks to a massive Western aid programme.

"Look, in Poland it worked," the source said. "There are dangers, of course, and we have to be careful. But we don't have any other choice."

One such danger is unemployment. In Poland, the number of workers out of jobs jumped to 150,000 and may reach 400,000 as inefficient enterprises are closed, Polish experts say.

In the Soviet Union, efforts to streamline bloated factory payrolls are leaving millions of people without jobs. Last October, the Communist Party daily Pravda said unemployment, which officially didn't exist under previous leaders, reached 27.6 per cent in Azerbaijan and 20 per cent or higher in the Central Asian republics of Tadzhikistan and Uzbekistan.

Immediately after his inauguration earlier this month, Gorbachev pledged drastic economic reform, and Western diplomats speculated that he needed the security and powers of the five-year term as president to risk the upheaval that might accompany severe measures.

Interfax on Friday quoted experts as saying the public is unprepared for the sweeping changes contemplated.

IMF plan on track: Jordan

AMMAN, March 25, (Reuters): Jordan's finance minister said today Amman was near agreement with the IMF on the next phase of an economic reform plan, but was still seeking ways to ease the burden of its \$3 billion foreign debt.

Basel Jaradneh told reporters an International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission would arrive on April 1 to set performance criteria for 1990 and to revise a medium-term plan up to 1993.

"We have already agreed in principle on the measures to be taken in 1990," he declared.

Formal agreement would unlock a further \$44 million in four tranches during 1990 from an IMF standby credit of 60 million SDRs (\$77 million provided to July, he said.

Jordan turned to the IMF a year ago after hard currency shortages forced it to suspend most foreign debt payments.

Jardaneh said foreign reserves now stood at \$380 million, including up to \$280 million in compulsory commercial bank deposits at the Central Bank.

Using the same method of calculation, this compared to about \$300 million at the end of last year and an unspecified negative balance in April 1989, he added.

Jardaneh said this year's decline in reserves was caused by resumption of debt servicing following rescheduling agreements with Jordan's official and commercial bank creditors.



Lall named new Air India commercial director

MADAN M. Lall, 56 (above) has been appointed as Air India's new Commercial Director and will assume charge effective April 2, 1990. He was deputy Commercial Director-Marketing and Sales at Air India headquarters, prior to his elevation to this post. Lall, in his long association with Air India spanning 34 years has held various positions including assignments abroad. He thus brings to this coveted post a blend of valuable field and corporate marketing experience.

His assumption of charge as Commercial Director at a time when the national carrier is undergoing major Corporate changes is expected to give the marketing efforts of Air India world-wide, a new thrust.

Lall, is married with three children. Though the official commitments leave little time for other engagements, Lall is a keen golfer. His other interests include reading, travel and ice-skating.

Superpower grain pact

VIENNA, March 25, (Reuters): Despite Mikhail Gorbachev's drive for self-sufficiency, the Soviet Union has agreed to buy billions of dollars of US grain in a sign that Moscow expects to depend on huge food imports for years to come.

Soviet and US negotiators yesterday unveiled a tentative agreement, hammered out here this week, that calls on Moscow to buy at least 10 million tonnes of US wheat, corn and soy products every year for five years.

At current prices, the agreement means minimum US sales of about \$6.5 billion over five years. "Obviously the Soviets are not going to reach self-sufficiency in the next five years," a senior US negotiator said.

A campaign to boost food output, especially meat, has been at the heart of Kremlin leader Gorbachev's economic reforms and is aimed at soothing long-standing grievances by Soviets who queue for scarce and often poor quality produce.

Farmers will be allowed access to frozen savings to pay salaries. Several bodies, including the order of lawyers, also benefit from the new concessions. Lawyers have been probably the most vociferous critics of the anti-inflation plan, many of them calling it unconstitutional.

But such comments represent today a minority view. Racing driver Nelson Piquet was more in tune with the popular mood when he called the plan "sensational."

Saney enjoyed the same high popularity as Collor when he introduced a price freeze in 1986 called the cruzado plan.

When the plan crumbled Saney became probably the least popular president in Brazilian history.

Gulf Bank weekly market review

KD rate lower against dollar

Kuwaiti dinar
Based on last week's opening middle market foreign exchange rates, the KD exchange rate traded slightly lower against the US dollar ending the week at 294.41 fils compared with its week before last closing at 293.70 fils. The KD continued to trade sharply higher against the pound sterling, ending the week at 469.73 fils compared with its week before last closing at 472.42 fils. The KD was lower against the DM ending the week at 172.17 fils compared with its week before last closing at 171.44 fils. The KD was also lower against the Sfr ending the week at 193.37 fils compared with its week before last closing at 192.81 fils.

The KD was higher against the Canadian dollar ending the week at 249.32 fils compared with its week before last closing at 250.18 fils. The KD was also higher against the Australian dollar ending the week at 220.81 fils compared with its week before last closing at 223.21 fils, according to Gulf Bank weekly market review.

The KD was lower against the Jordanian dinar ending the week at 436.16 fils compared with its week before last closing at 435.27 fils. The KD traded slightly lower against all other GCC currencies compared to the week before last rates.

As for the KD money market rates, short term interbank offer rates, traded relatively higher compared to their previous rates. One month and 3 months rates ended around 8.75 per cent — 8.85 per cent range compared to 8.75 per cent — 8.81 per cent range the week before last. Both 6-month and 12-month rates also traded higher around 8.87 per cent — 9.00 per cent range.

As for Treasury Bills, the CBK announced two new T-Bill issues, the first is 3-month T-Bill issue No. (104) of KD 725 million, with effective and maturity dates of March 28 and June 27, 1990, respectively. The second issue is 6-month T-Bill issue No. (105) of KD 50 million with effective and maturity dates of March 28 and Sept 26, 1990, respectively.

World stock markets
Wall Street share prices moved lower last week on news that US consumer prices rose more than expected in February, programme selling, falling bond prices and profit taking. However, prices recovered later in the week, as Tokyo equity prices rebounded. The Dow Jones Industrial Average opened the week at 2755 and closed lower at 2704, recording a loss of 37 points over the previous week's closing at 2741.

Share prices on the London Stock Exchange moved higher last week. Following a cautious announcement, prices climbed, buoyed by a measure to remove a tax on securities investment and the raising of the limit on schemes which encourage savings in the form of shares. Another round of satisfactory company results, a fairly calm reception for the latest UK trade figures and new account buying helped London equities. The FTSE-100 opened the week at 2238 and closed higher at 2284, recording a gain of 20 points over the previous week's closing at 2264.

US dollar
The dollar traded mixed for most part of the week as the lack of fresh bullish factors coupled with Wall Street overall weak stock prices, trapped the dollar into a mixed performance.

The US trade balance (on a customs cleared value basis) for the month of January recorded a deficit of \$9.25 billion against a revised deficit of \$7.68 billion in December of last year. Total exports in January were up 4.0 per cent to a record \$32.07 billion, while imports rose 7.3 per cent to \$41.32 billion. Soaring oil imports drove the US trade deficit up during January. The total import bill rose 7.3 per cent in January to \$41.32 billion, but the cost of imported oil climbed 44 per cent to \$5.86 billion as heating oil inventories were replenished after record cold weather in December. After December revision the overall 1989 trade deficit stands at \$108.99 billion which is still the lowest in five years since a \$106.7 billion deficit in 1984.

US Consumer price index (CPI-U) for the month of February rose 0.5 per cent against 1.1 per cent in January, while excluding food and energy prices, which is the so-called core rate of inflation the consumer price index rose 0.3 per cent in the month of February. Furthermore, the US real average weekly earnings of US workers, after adjusting for inflation and seasonal factors, rose 0.3 per cent in February from the prior month, while the January weekly earnings were revised to a negative 1.2 per cent.

The Federal Reserve is apparently still at conflict with the Bush administration regarding its monetary policy. Although the Bush administration believes lower interest rates are needed in order to spur US economic growth, the Fed seems to advocate higher rates to cool inflation. We believe, so far recently released US economic data confirm the fact that the economy is growing at a steady pace while previously debated worries over the possibility of a recession have eroded, accordingly the Fed is not seen at the moment forced to change its current monetary policy.

Pound sterling
The pound sterling opened the week against the US dollar at \$1.6140/30 and closed lower at \$1.6005/15 compared to its week before last closing at \$1.6185/95.

The pound eased following UK budget speech, which was considered as neutral to marginally higher and implied UK interest rates will remain at 15 per cent. Also comments from Chancellor of the Exchequer Major that he would raise UK interest rates in January if necessary failed to support the UK unit. Sterling was not adversely affected by the Conservative party's defeat in the Mid-Staffordshire parliamentary by-election, as the market had already priced the election results into currency rates.

The UK current account deficit and the trade deficit were identical in February, narrowing to £1.4 billion from £2.0 billion in January. The deficit narrowed due to a fall in import values of 6.50 per cent from January, while exports declined 1 per cent. The retail price index rose 0.6 per cent in February, the same as in January, and showed a year-on-year increase of 7.5 per cent in February against 7.7 per cent in the previous month.

Political uncertainty would now dominate the UK economic scene with the trade figures out of the way. The long-term outlook for the pound remains bearish and no major gains are forecast this week, with market attention being focused on the dollar, yen and aspects.

Japanese yen
The yen opened the week against the US dollar at 152.95/05 yen and closed the week lower at 154.25/35 yen compared with its week before last closing at 152.65/75 yen.

The yen continued to trade around its three-year low versus the dollar, while last week discount rate rise by Bank of Japan has come too late, and appears to be insufficient to stem the continued weakness of the yen, or even head off a build-up in inflationary pressure. Bank of Japan increased its official discount rate by one full percentage point to 5.25 per cent which is its highest level since 1983. The increase in the discount rate had been widely expected over the past few weeks, accordingly had BOJ done this a month ago it might have had some better effect. The new increase in the official discount rate is the fourth rise since last May, and follows a 0.5 per cent point in last December.

The yen is expected to continue to trade weak against the dollar, although some levelling off is expected over the coming week. Accordingly the yen is most likely to trade against the dollar around the 152-154 yen level.

Deutsche mark
The mark opened the week against the US dollar at 1.6850/60 DM and closed the week higher at 1.7030/40 DM compared with its week before last closing at 1.7120/30 marks.

The surprise win by the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) was initially received by the market as positive for the mark since speedy monetary union is seen as a priority by the new leaders.

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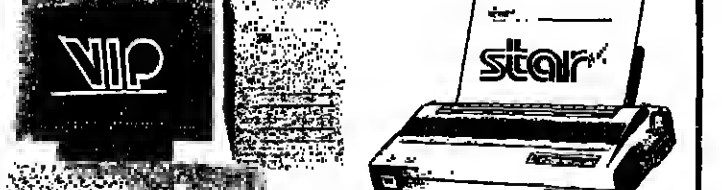
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SPORTS

Marseille, Monaco defeated

PARIS, March 25. (Reuters): Marseille and Monaco, suffering setbacks after reaching the semi-finals of European soccer cups three days ago, both lost in the French League yesterday.

Second-placed Marseille fell victim to Paraguayan striker Roberto Cabanas, who scored twice for Brittany club Brest in their 2-1 home defeat of the European Cup semi-finalists.

Marseille took the lead in the sixth minute through Bruno Germain after a free kick from England's Chris Waddle, before Cabanas volleyed goals in the 12th and 22nd minutes.

The first of the Paraguayan's goals came from a clear mistake by Marseille's substitute goalkeeper Jean Castaneda, standing in for Gaetan Huard, who broke his leg in the 3-1 European Cup victory over CFKA Sofia on Wednesday.

Marseille also lost League top scorer Jean-Pierre Papin five minutes from full time when he was kicked by Brest defender Ronan Salau, who was sent off. Papin walked off the field and apparently was not seriously hurt.

Monaco suffered a 4-2 beating at home to Auxerre, with Hungarian Kalman Kovacs scoring a hat-trick for the visitors.

Third-placed Monaco, playing in front of a crowd of just 2,000 people in their luxurious Louis II Stadium, qualified for the semi-finals of the Cup Winners Cup this week after beating Spain's Real Valladolid on penalties.

Auxerre's victory over Monaco eased the bitterness of being knocked out of European competition on Wednesday when they were beaten by Italy's Fiorentina in the UEFA Cup.

Monaco trainer Arsene Wenger plans to take his team across the Italian border to Genoa on Sunday to watch Sampdoria, the French side's opponents in the semi-finals.

Bordeaux maintained top place with an impressive 3-0 victory over sixth-placed Paris Saint-Germain.

Results			
Bordeaux	3	PSG	0
Brest	2	Marseille	1
Monaco	2	Auxerre	4
Socchaux	1	Nice	1
Cen	1	Lyon	1
St Etienne	0	Nantes	0
Lille	3	Toulouse	0
Toulon	1	Metz	1
Cannes	4	Mulhouse	1
Racing Paris	0	Montpellier	0

Standings (goals underplayed, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Bordeaux	30	19	6	5	45	18	44
Marseille	29	17	7	5	60	27	41
Monaco	31	11	6	14	29	22	35
Socchaux	30	14	6	10	40	34	34
Lyon	30	12	9	9	33	28	33
Nantes	30	10	11	9	28	24	31
P.S.G.	30	13	5	12	37	36	31
Auxerre	30	9	11	10	30	35	29
Toulouse	30	9	11	9	26	31	29
Brest	30	12	5	13	27	34	29
Cen	30	10	9	11	28	36	29
Metz	30	7	9	14	26	39	28
St Etienne	30	10	8	11	33	35	28
Lille	30	10	7	13	37	35	27
Cannes	30	9	9	12	35	39	27
Toulon	30	8	10	12	24	39	26
Montpellier	30	9	7	14	35	41	25
Racing Paris	30	9	7	14	33	49	25
Nice	30	6	12	12	29	40	24
Mulhouse	30	8	7	15	32	44	23

Cup officials

REGENSDORF, Switzerland, March 25. (UPI): Coaches and team managers of the 24 soccer teams competing for the World Cup in Italy June familiarized themselves with the conduct of the tournament during a two-day session at Regensdorf, near Zurich which ended yesterday.

"They were informed about how everything will be organized, about travel plans, security and the like," said FIFA spokesman Guido Togoni.

"I'm very pleased," said Togoni, who last started a first-team game in November. "I wasn't too worried about coming straight in after being in the reserves for so long. We train hard at Watford."

"When you score so early, you get a boost and everyone just got carried away with it," said Thompson, who knocked in a simple goal from a long throw-in.

"I suppose it gave me an extra bit of excitement to score against

Yugoslav overpowers Wiesner

Seles wins singles title



Monica Seles in action against Judith Wiesner (below). (Reuters wirephoto)



KEY BISCAYNE, Fla., March 25. (Reuters): Sixteen-year-old Monica Seles of Yugoslavia overpowered Austrian Judith Wiesner 6-1 6-2 to win the women's singles title at \$2.55 million International Players Tennis Championships yesterday.

The third-seeded Seles needed just over an hour to defeat Wiesner, seeded 15th, and earn \$112,500 for the second title of her career and first of 1990. Wiesner collected \$56,250 as runner-up.

Seles, ranked fifth in the world, was simply too strong for the backcourt for the 28th ranked Wiesner.

"This tournament helped me so much getting my confidence back," said Seles, who suffered several early-round losses this year before finding her form in Key Biscayne.

Seles, who did not have to face any opponent seeded higher than ninth, said she controlled the match by keeping the ball away from Wiesner's forehand.

"If her forehand starts going she's a tough player to beat," Seles said. "But I was able to do a lot on her serve and my serve, too."

Seles, who hits two-handed groundstrokes from both sides and with more power than most women in the game, jumped on her opponent from the start and built an early 3-0 lead.

She's a leftie and I had problems with her angles," said Wiesner, who was never able to find a rhythm against Seles. "She takes the ball so early, and she doesn't let you into the match."

Seles missed chances to break for 4-0 when she committed a rare dropshot error that enabled Wiesner to pull to 3-1.

But Seles made effective use of

her passing shots and a disguised drop-shot to break Wiesner for a 5-1 and closed out the first set in 28 minutes.

Wiesner fought off four break points in the first game of the second set and stayed even with Seles through 2-2, but the Austrian was unable to take charge, always sent running by Seles's penetrating winners.

Seles ran off the next four games, breaking Wiesner in the fifth and seventh, and ended the one-sided contest by drilling a forehand winner down the line.

The Yugoslavian teenager said she would reward herself with a new leather jacket to celebrate her victory.

"Each week I give myself a bonus if I win," Seles said. "This week I saw a leather jacket and I said if I win then I get it."

Wiesner said Seles, loud grunting on every shot was not a problem, although it was the first time the two players had ever met.

"The grunting didn't bother me," Wiesner said. "It's just a habit she got used to and couldn't get rid of."

Seles said she had tried to get rid of the habit, but so far has failed.

World No. 1 Steffi Graf skipped the tourney because she is recovering from a broken thumb, and No. 2 Martina Navratilova is taking some time off. No. 1 seed Gabriela Sabatini and No. 2 Zina Garrison were eliminated earlier in the tournament.

Sweden's Stefan Edberg was to meet Andre Agassi today in the men's final.

Edberg has won both of their previous meetings, including a hotly contested four-set victory in the finals at Indian Wells, California, two weeks ago.



Seles proudly displays the crystal trophy she won. (Reuters wirephoto)

Olympic baseball stadium's first stone tossed into place

BARCELONA, Spain, March 25. (AP): In a pitch of Olympic proportions, Barcelona mayor Pasqual Maragall yesterday tossed into place the first stone of the new baseball stadium for the 1992 Barcelona Summer Olympic Games.

Maragall, who is also president of the Barcelona Olympic Organising Committee, joined other Olympic, local and regional officials in the dirt at the site in the neighbouring town of Hospitalet de Llobregat.

Bulldozer work on the stadium began March 1 and the 2,500-capacity facility is scheduled to be completed by March 31, 1991, at a cost of 816 million pesetas (\$7.9 million).

Baseball will be a fully recognised Olympic sport for the first time at the Barcelona Olympiad.

Baseball was played as a demonstration sport at the 1988 Seoul (South Korea) Summer Olympics, when the United States beat Japan 5-3 to win the baseball titles.

Ewing fails to save New York

NEW YORK, March 25. (AP): Patrick Ewing scored a career-high 31 points but the Boston Celtics scored New York 22-4 during the seven minutes he was out of the game and defeated the Knicks 115-110 last night for their fifth consecutive victory.

Reggie Lewis scored 31 points for the Celtics, who posted their five-game winning streak since the 1987-88 season. The Knicks have lost six consecutive games, including seven of nine at home after winning 22 of their first 24 at Madison Square Garden.

Cavaliers 115, Nets 108: Steve Kerr, the NBA leader in point shooting percentage, spotted a 28-point second quarter by making all four of his long-range attempts. Cleveland handed the Nets their 10th straight defeat. New Jersey has lost 29 of 32 overall and 23 consecutive games on the road.

Kerr connected on all five of his long-range shots in the game, finishing with 17 points. His shooting percentage from beyond the 3-point stripe this season improved to .517. Mark Price led Cleveland with 20 points and Dennis Hopson scored 20 for the Nets.

Hawks 122, Hornets 109: Dominique Wilkins scored 27 of his 38 points in a 14-2 run at the start of the fourth quarter. Atlanta ended a three-game losing streak. The Hawks took the lead by good 86-84 on Cliff Levingston's layup with three seconds left in the third quarter. Then, they went to their 14-2 run to make a 100-84 lead with 8:41 left.

Kevin Willis had 26 points, Moses Malone 22 for the Hawks, including 10 in the fourth quarter. Malone also had 12 rebounds. Armon Gilliam led the Hornets with 24 points, 12 in the third quarter, but none in the fourth.

Results			
Atlanta	122	Charlotte	109
Cleveland	115	New Jersey	108
Boston	115	New York	110
Milwaukee	109	Orlando	107
Philadelphia	114	Washington	102
S.Kings	116	Chicago	113
Golden State	102	Houston	97
San Antonio	105	Denver	98
Purdue	140	Denver	138
Phoenix	121	Seattle	95
Utah	112	L.A. Clippers	98

Atletico humiliate Barcelona

BARCELONA, Spain, March 25. (Reuters): Atletico Madrid inflicted a humiliating 2-0 home defeat on a uninspired Barcelona yesterday and toppled the Catalans their second position in the Spanish First Division.

England and Tottenham striker Gary Lineker was there to cheer on his former Barcelona team-mates and the Camp Nou fans roared his welcome with cries of "Lineker, Lineker," but they had nothing else to shout about.

After a dull first half hour Bar-

celona striker Eusebio Sacristan gave his Spanish World squad colleague Julio Salinas an opening. But Atletico keeper Abel Resino easily deflected Salinas' weak shot.

Salinas missed another chance when he came face to face with Abel less than two metres from Atletico's goal but tripped over his own feet and knocked the ball out.

Manolo Sanchez created Atletico's lead in the 39th minute, passing veteran Barcelona back Jose Alesanco and shoot-

ing, Barcelona keeper Andoni Zubizarreta knocked it out but Antonio Orejuela appeared from nowhere to whack the ball home.

Atletico's new attacking grit and discipline, instilled by Joaquin Peiro who took over as coach after Javier Clemente's sacking three weeks ago, shone through in the second half.

Brazilian striker Baltazar de Moraes consolidated their lead with a 69th minute goal and Barcelona could only struggle on dejectedly to whistles and sarcastic cheers from the home fans.

IOC guidelines to be followed at Cup finals

ZURICH, March 25. (Reuters): Doping guidelines laid down by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) will be followed at the World Cup soccer finals in Italy this year, the International Football Federation (Fifa) said yesterday.

Fifa general secretary Sepp Blatter told the media session of a two-day Fifa workshop that doping procedures would match those for the soccer tournament at the Seoul Olympics in 1988.

Two players would be drawn at random from each team tested in the first phase, and three players in the second and third phases.

The confirmation of a positive case through a second analysis would be known within 48 hours, he said.

Blatter said there had been no positive results at the Seoul soccer tournament.

Blatter said Fifa expected more viewers to watch this summer's finals on television than watched the Seoul Olympics. An audience of 15 billion was anticipated, compared with 12.8 billion for the 1986 finals in Mexico for 120 hours of television time.

"The Seoul Olympics with 25 sports attracted 9.8 billion viewers with 180 hours of television," Blatter said.

Flash interviews of two minutes maximum immediately after matches would be permitted for the first time at the finals, Fifa press officer Guido Togoni said. They were granted as a compromise after an earlier decision to ban interviews of any kind on or off the pitch.



Match drawn

St Pauli's Andre Gotke (left) and Hamburg's Jens Bocherl fight for the ball during a West German First Division soccer match which ended 0-0 on Sunday. (Reuters wirephoto)

Kieft goal extends PSV's League lead

AMSTERDAM, March 25. (Reuters): Dutch international Wim Kieft scored yesterday as PSV Eindhoven shrugged off their mid-week exit from the European Cup by defeating MVV Maastricht 1-0 to stretch their lead at the top of the Dutch First Division.

PSV, who went out of the European Cup 3-1 on aggregate to Bayern Munich in the table by three points from Roda JC, who beat Doornspijk 5-0.

Kieft scored his 18th goal of the season two minutes before half-time when he converted a Juul Ellerman corner, but it was a disappointing performance from PSV against a team they trounced 8-1 in Eindhoven last October.

Friendly

Roda JC striker John van Loen celebrated his call-up to the Dutch squad for next week's friendly in the Soviet Union by scoring twice against Haarlem to take his tally for the season to 14.

Newly promoted Vitesse kept up their challenge in fourth place as goals by Hans Arum and Rick Hilgers gave them a 2-1 win away at Den Bosch.

Ajax Amsterdam could, however, still pose the biggest threat to PSV's hopes of a fifth consecutive title. Ajax trail the leaders by four points but have two games in hand and will hope to close the gap when they entertain Fortuna Sittard today.

Stand-in-striker helps sink Aston Villa

LONDON, March 25. (Reuters): Garry Thompson, who a week ago was playing reserve soccer in the English Second Division, was the unlikely savior of League leaders Aston Villa yesterday.

The 30-year-old striker, brought as a last-minute replacement on Thursday's transfer deadline day for Ian Wright, who broke a leg in a midweek game, scored the fourth-minute goal that beat Villa and eased Palace's relegation worries.

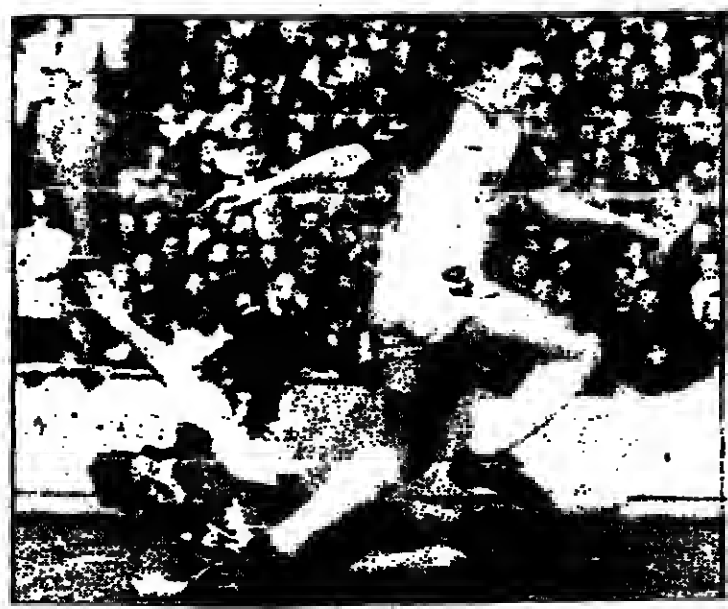
Thompson, who cost \$200,000 (\$320,000) from Watford, was doubly delighted by his debut performance which helped sink his former club 1-0 and outshone Villa's expensive recruit Tony Cascarino, who was booked.

Worried

"I'm very pleased," said Thompson, who last started a first-team game in November. "I wasn't too worried about coming straight in after being in the reserves for so long. We train hard at Watford."

"When you score so early, you get a boost and everyone just got carried away with it," said Thompson, who knocked in a simple goal from a long throw-in.

"I suppose it gave me an extra bit of excitement to score against



Cascarino passes the grounded Andy Thorn of Crystal Palace in their match. (Reuters wirephoto)

Villa because they are my old club. But I still think they can win the title and I would like to see them do it."

Villa's chances of claiming the title for the first time in nine years, however, have suffered

recently from inconsistency.

They have only won twice in their last seven games, which included being hammered 3-0 at home by Wimbledon a month ago just three days after displacing Liverpool at the top of the

table. Liverpool's challenge also faltered this week when they lost at Tottenham in a game switched from Saturday for live television. They trail Villa by three points with two games in hand.

A day after losing to Second Division Oldham in the F.A. Cup quarterfinals earlier this month, Villa manager Graham Taylor hought Cascarino for £1.5 million (\$2.4 million) from Millwall for add firepower to his attack.

But yesterday Taylor admitted his side lacked the killer punch needed to prevent Liverpool, or even Arsenal, stealing the championship.

"We never rally got to terms with the game. They are the type of side we seem to find difficult to play against. I thought over the 90 minutes we probably did just enough to get a draw," he said.

The inability of Villa and Liverpool to open a clear advantage at the top of the table leaves Arsenal with an outside chance of retaining their title.

Their 3-1 win at Derby, albeit against an injury-hit side, was reminiscent of the away form that was the foundation of their championship-winning season.

They are nine points behind Villa in third place with a game in hand.

Arsenal had Martin Hayes to thank for their fourth away win. Starting a game for only the sixth time this season, Hayes scored in the sixth and 45th minutes.

Kevin Campbell, another striker who has spent most of this season in the reserves, scored Arsenal's other goal.

Manchester United welcomed the return of England midfielder Neil Webb to the first team after six months on the sidelines with Achilles tendon trouble.

Clear

He made a 20-minute appearance as substitute and contributed to the second goal in United's 2-0 win at Southampton which lifted them four points clear of the relegation zone.

Luton triumphed 2-1 in a vital relegation battle with Millwall. Victory lifted Luton into fourth-bottom place and consigned Millwall to the foot of the table after Charlton moved two points above them with a 2-1 win at Coventry.

Manchester City, who did not play, slipped to third from bottom, two behind Luton but with a game in hand.



Duke's Christian Laettner (left) holds up a piece of the net after scoring the winning basket. Right: Connecticut's Nadan Henefeld and Duke's Brian Davis (No. 23) battle for a rebound. (Reuters wirephoto)

Duke and Arkansas in final four

DALLAS, March 25. (Reuters): The University of Arkansas and Duke University claimed the first two berths in the final four of the NCAA US College Basketball Championship with hard-fought victories yesterday.

Arkansas held off a stubborn challenge by the University of Texas for a 88-85 victory, while Christian Laettner hit a 17-foot jump at the buzzer in overtime to lift Duke to a thrilling 79-78 upset of the University of Connecticut.

Duke's overtime victory in the East Regional final at East Rutherford, New Jersey, put the Blue Devils into the final four for the third successive year and the fourth time in five years.

The last two places in the final four were to be decided today when Georgia Tech plays the University of Minnesota in the Southeast Regional final and Loyola Marymount faces the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in the West Regional final.

Arkansas led 43-36 at the half, but after a Texas

comeback, the Razorbacks needed two free throws in the closing seconds by Ron Hucy to clinch victory.

Lenzie Howell led Arkansas with 21 points and Lee Mayberry added 18, while Texas was paced by 20 points each from Joey Wright and Travis Maya.

Connecticut, looking for the first ever final-four appearance, fell behind 37-30 at halftime, but a furious second-half rally and late three-point basket by Chris Smith levelled the score 72-72.

Duke nearly won the game in the final second of regulation time when Egyptian-born Alaa Abdelnaby had a shot roll off the rim as time expired.

Abdelnaby led Duke with 27 points and 14 rebounds, while Laettner was the high scorer for Connecticut with 23 points.

"There were an incredible number of big plays made, but we made the last one, said Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski.



Connecticut's Rod Seelers (left) walks to his bench as the Duke Blue Devils celebrate. (Reuters wirephoto)

Three-way tie for top spot

ORLANDO, Fla., March 25 (Reuters). Scott Hoch let a two-stroke lead slip away with a double bogey on the 17th hole and fell into a three-way tie with Curtis Strange and Greg Norman of Australia at the Orlando Invitational golf tournament yesterday.

The three stood at nine-under-par 207 with today's holes remaining in the 900,000-dollar event.

Fulton Allem of South Africa, Graig Farry of Australia, Larry Mize and Robert Gamez were one stroke off the pace at eight-under-par 208.

Nick Faldo of Britain, after taking bogey at the last hole, Paul Azinger and Corey Pavin were another two strokes back at six-under 210.

Hoch blew sole possession of the lead when his two-iron shot on 17 came up well short of the green and landed in the water.

Hoch finished with a two-under-par 70 for the day, while Norman shot a brilliant seven-under 65 and Strange recorded a third-round 68.

Norman birdied four holes on the outgoing nine and gained his share of the lead with birdies at the 15th, 16th and 18th holes.

At the final hole Norman hit a splendid six-iron shot to within six feet and made the putt.

Shooting

In Phoenix, Pat Bradley celebrated her 39th birthday yesterday by shooting a five-under-par 68 to grab a one stroke lead after three rounds of the \$500,000 Turquoise Classic golf tournament.

Bradley, who moved into a strong position to crack the three-million-dollar career earnings mark, stood at 10-under-par 209, one stroke ahead of Japan's Ayako Okamoto.

Okamoto recorded her second successive four-under 69 on the 6,514-yard Moon Valley Country Club course to take sole possession of second place.

And in Florence, Italy, Britain's Colin Montgomerie birdied the last hole for a 67 to preserve his lead in yesterday's third round of the Volvo Open at the Ugoletto Club.

But after being five strokes clear of the field at the turn, he ended only one ahead of countryman Russell Claydon, the first round leader who played the back nine in 31 for a 66.

And with Argentina's Eduardo Romero only a stroke further back after a 64 and Australian Peter O'Malley one more behind following a 68, the 26-year-old Scot faced a tough day as he tries to repeat his first Tour victory in last year's Portuguese Open.

Coggi outpoints Ramirez

Gonzalez KOs Tejedor

MEXICO CITY, March 25 (Agencies). Mexican light-flyweight WBC champion Humberto "Chiquita" Gonzalez knocked out Colombian challenger Francisco Tejedor, in the third round of yesterday's fight.

The winning punch, coming 31 seconds into the third round, was a left uppercut to the chin.

Tejedor fell into convulsions after the knockout, but left the ring on his feet.

"Chiquita" came out aggressively from the start of the match, body and keeping his opponent hacked up against the ropes.

A wild exchange of punches broke out early in the second round. "Chiquita" overcame his 5-inch (15 cm) height disadvantage, held control through the round, leaving Tejedor to rely on the quick shuffling of his feet.

The knockout at 9:38 pm local

time, before some 8,000 spectators, marked "Chiquita" Gonzalez's second defence of the World Boxing Council light-flyweight title.

Gonzalez told reporters in the ring after the fight that he never felt his left uppercut to the chin to be hard enough to knock Tejedor down. He said when he tried to come back with the right, his punch didn't make contact because the Colombian was already on the ground.

"I'm ready for whatever rival they bring at me," Gonzalez said.

"Chiquita" Gonzalez said he never felt any hard punches from his opponent but only scratches around his eyes.

"Now I am going to rest for a while and then I hope to keep fighting," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez's trainer, Justo Sanchez said they were hoping for victory but had not expected it to happen so fast. Sanchez said they thought it would be more work.

Gonzalez, who has knocked out 20 of his 26 opponents, was scheduled to fight next in May, in Miami, against Cuban light flyweight Luis Monzote.

The match was Tejedor's first foreign fight.

"Chiquita" Gonzalez, 24, a native of Mexico City, weighed in at 107.5 pounds (48.7 kg).

The 22-year-old Tejedor, weighing in at 105.6 pounds (47.9 kg), was the top ranking WBC boxer in the light flyweight category. At 5-feet-6 (1.70 m), he towered over the 5-foot-1 (1.5 m) "Chiquita" Gonzalez.

The high speed fight was refereed by Philipino Carlos Padilla. "Chiquita" Gonzalez will take home \$30,000 for his 8-minute performance. Tejedor receives \$10,000.

Tejedor who said earlier that he was counting on height

advantage and superior reach to overcome Gonzalez, remarked afterwards that he was surprised at the power of the title-holder.

"I've worked hard for nothing," he lamented.

It was the second time Gonzalez has retained the title he won from South Korean Lee Yul-Woo last June 25. It was also his first title fight at home.

And in Ajaccio, Corsica, Argentina's Juan Martin Coggi held off a valiant challenge last night from Mexican veteran Jose Luis Ramirez to retain his World Boxing Association super-lightweight crown with a unanimous decision.

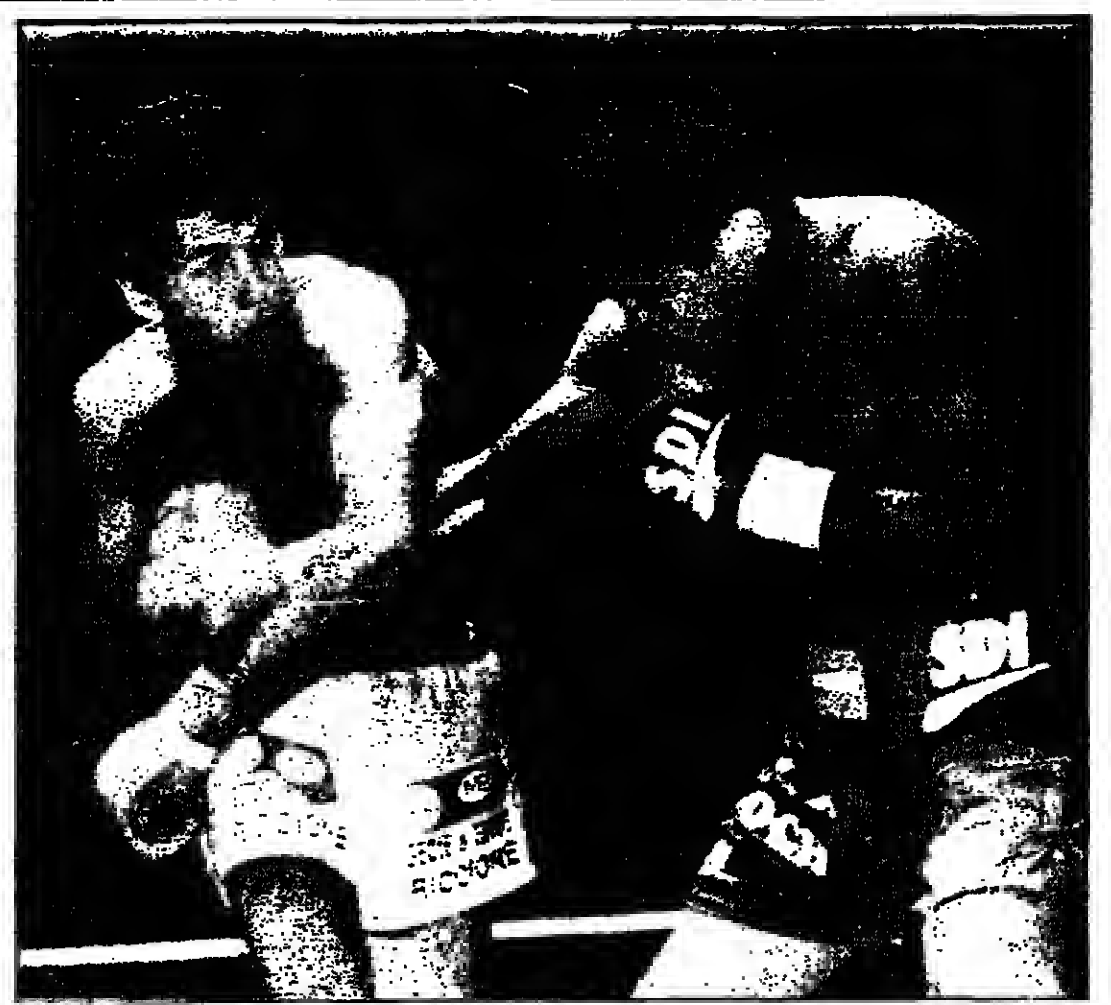
It was Coggi's fourth defence of a title he has held since July 1987. He never hurt Ramirez badly, but managed to land more punches throughout the 12-round fight and successfully fended off numerous aggressive charges by the 31-year-old former World Boxing Council light-weight champion.

There had been speculation among boxing writers prior to the fight that it might be the last title challenge for Ramirez, who has fought professionally since 1973. His record is now 103 wins and nine losses, most of them against fighters who at one time or another were world champions.

The 28-year-old Coggi, who is of Italian descent and lives much of the time in Italy, won his 43rd professional fight. He has only one loss and two draws.

Ramirez lost his WBC light-weight crown last year when he was defeated by countryman Julio Cesar Chavez in Las Vegas in a title unification fight.

Ramirez attempted to regain a portion against Pernell Whitaker last August in Virginia but dropped a unanimous decision.



Coggi (left) hits Ramirez with a hard left. (Reuters wirephoto)

Jager breaks 50-metre world record twice

NASHVILLE, Tenn., March 25 (Reuters). American Tom Jager yesterday became the first swimmer in history to crack 22 seconds in the 50-metre freestyle and he did it twice in one day.

Jager, 25, broke his own world record in the semifinals of a special match race among the top-eight American 50-metre freestylers at the US sprint championship when he clocked 21.98 seconds.

He then returned for the match race final against five-time Olympic gold medalist Matt Biondi and shaved an additional 17 hundredths of a second off his earlier time to set a world mark of 21.81 seconds. Biondi also broke the earlier mark with a 21.85.

"It couldn't have gone more perfect," said Jager, who finished behind Biondi to take the 1988 Olympic silver medal in the event in Seoul.

"I was really surprised. My first two swims were so smooth and relatively fast. The last race was choppy for me but I just kept plugging away and got to the wall."

"It was great for me because Matt was here. It was a head to head race to see who was the fastest. You could feel the excitement building," said Jager, who had set the previous world mark of 22.12 at the Pan Pacific Championships in Tokyo last year.

Jager collected \$10,000 for winning the event and earned an additional \$2,000 bonus for setting a world record in the final. Biondi collected \$5,000.

"I can't be upset coming within four hundredths," Biondi said. "I was more upset with losing the National Championship to him Friday night (at the US Short Course Championships)."

"What an incredible moment for swimming," Biondi continued. "I knew Tom was motivated when he lost the gold medal to me at the Olympics and now I'm motivated to work even harder for the future."

Jager's historic victory came less than 24 hours after breaking Biondi's American record of 19.15 seconds over 50-yards at the short course event with a time of 19.05.

While Jager and Biondi looked forward to future showdowns, yesterday's event signalled the end of Rowdy Gaines' competitive career.

The 31-year-old Gaines, winner of three gold medals at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics and a former world record holder in the 100 — and 200-metre freestyle, clocked 23.09 to lose his opening heat to Adam Schmitt, who swam a lifetime best 22.69.

"I had no grand illusions I was going to win this sucker," Gaines said. "My goal was basically to break 23 seconds and see what happens. For a guy that's five, six, and seven years older than anybody else in the field I feel pretty good."

"This was my swan song. I'm married, I have a kid and a job. I didn't embarrass myself today. These guys are just bigger, stronger and younger than I am."

Soviets lose another rugby match

BRISBANE, Australia, March 25 (AP). Australian state team Queensland scored a 26-10 victory over the touring Soviet Union rugby union team at Ballymore today, but coach John Connolly blasted his team's performance.

Queensland scored 23 points without reply in the first half, but allowed the Soviets to hit back with two tries in the second period.

"That was a terrible effort," said Connolly. "We just went out and went through the motions."

Winger Paul Carozza led Queensland with two tries. Centre Jason Little and hooker Mark McBain also scored tries, while fly half Michael Lynagh kicked two conversions and two penalties.

Replacement prop Givi Pitzhala and lock Alexander Tikhonov scored tries for the Soviets.

"We have improved with each match on the tour. I think we can still play better than today but it was pleasing to see the team improve its organisational skills and play in a more collective fashion," said Soviet coach Victor Masyura, whose charges saw their tour record drop to 2-3.

Scores: Queensland 26 (Paul Carozza 2, Jason Little, Mark McBain tries; Michael Lynagh 2 conversions, 2 penalties) def. Soviet Union 10 (Alexander Tikhonov, Givi Pitzhala tries; Nikolai Dzanidze conversion).

Ireland salvage self-respect

LONDON, March 25 (Reuters). Ireland salvaged some self-respect and probably saved coach Jimmy Davidson his job with a 14-8 win over Wales in the Five Nations Rugby Union Championship yesterday.

"The missing ingredient all season has been confidence and I hope this result will put that right," a relieved Davidson said.

"But I have told all the players that they should see this not as an end but as a beginning."

Yesterday's match, the last in this year's championship, was eminently forgettable.

With Scotland already installed as champions following their stirring victory over England a week earlier, only pride was at stake at Dublin's Lansdowne Road as both sides strove for their first win of the championship.

In the end home advantage proved crucial as Ireland outscored Wales by three tries to two to hand the visitors their first ever championship whitewash.

No Welsh side has ever lost all four championship matches and Wales have now lost each of their last five internationals, another all-time low.

Coach Ron Waldron put a brave face on the defeat.

"The game turned on little things," he said. "It was all about ifs and buts, but we will certainly improve on this performance."

"It's going to take us time to develop but I honestly believe we will be a far better side come the World Cup."

The once-mighty Welsh, who ruled European rugby during the 1970s, could hardly get worse.

Their scrum was a shambles, the lineout ineffectual and their once inventive backs hesitant and error-prone.

Ireland, taking full advantage of a strong following wind, rocked the Welsh with 10 points in the first 13 minutes and looked likely to reach 30 by halftime.

But they became prone to error and failed to take full advantage of the generous supply of lineout ball won by captain Donal Lenihan.

"There were many mistakes made but I think that was down to over-anxiety," Davidson commented.

"There was a tremendous feeling of tension among the players and they made uncharacteristic errors because they lacked confidence."

Boden smashes javelin record

AUSTIN, Texas, March 25 (UPI). University of Texas sophomore Patrik Boden, the 1988 NCAA champion in the javelin throw, set a world record yesterday during the Texas Quadrangular, school officials said.

Boden, a native of Sweden, tossed the javelin 292 feet, 4 inches (89 m, 10 cm), smashing the previous record of 287-7, set by Czechoslovakia's Jan Zelezny in 1987.

During a triangular meet in Los Angeles last week with UCLA and Fresno State, Boden had a throw of 271-7 to break the collegiate record of 271-1, held by Dag Wennlund, formerly of Texas.

Kuwait Nomads 1989-90 mini-rugby season ends

THE Kuwait Nomads mini-rugby season 1989-90 came to a close on Friday after six months of learning, effort and a few bruises. The last event of the season featured the annual game of Boys against Dads.

A good crowd turned up at the Ahmadi pitch to witness the usual destruction of the fathers' team. After the initial warm-up exercises which included a distinct lack of parents, each group, senior, middle and junior played against a respective fathers side. Although the Dads were restricted to using one arm only, they were naturally battered into defeat.

A final match saw a more competitive and tougher game between a combined mini-rugby side of about 40 boys narrowly defeating a fathers' team with the match resembling Custer's last stand. The enthusiasm of the boys stood out as they exacted revenge for all the verbal advice they received from the touchlines over



All the boys with their certificates

the past few months. After the match, Geoff Bennett, treasurer of the Kuwait Nomads and organiser of the mini-rugby

presented all the boys with certificates. The boys in turn presented whistles to their coaches, presumably to save their voices next season. A

final presentation of a beautiful carpet was given to Geoff and his wife Najwa, from all the parents and boys, in appreciation of

their effort and hard work during the season.

The highlight of the season was the February trip to Bahrain, which saw

over 40 boys make the journey. Five games in all were played resulting in the senior side winning 2-0 and 5-1, the middle team outclassing their opponents 5-0 and a combined side adding another victory by 2-0. The only loss was a commendable 3-1 defeat for the juniors, who fielded a smaller and younger team than their Bahraini counterparts.

The following day, each boy was presented with his rugby trophy. They in turn showed their appreciation by offering the coaches a different form of liquid refreshment by throwing them into the pool.

Overall the 1989-90 season has been very successful, not only the results in Bahrain, but also due to a record number of 85 boys attending training. This is in addition to the effort put in by the coaches, the moms at the tea table and the parents who regularly turned up to support and cheer the boys. Mini-rugby will recommence in October this year.



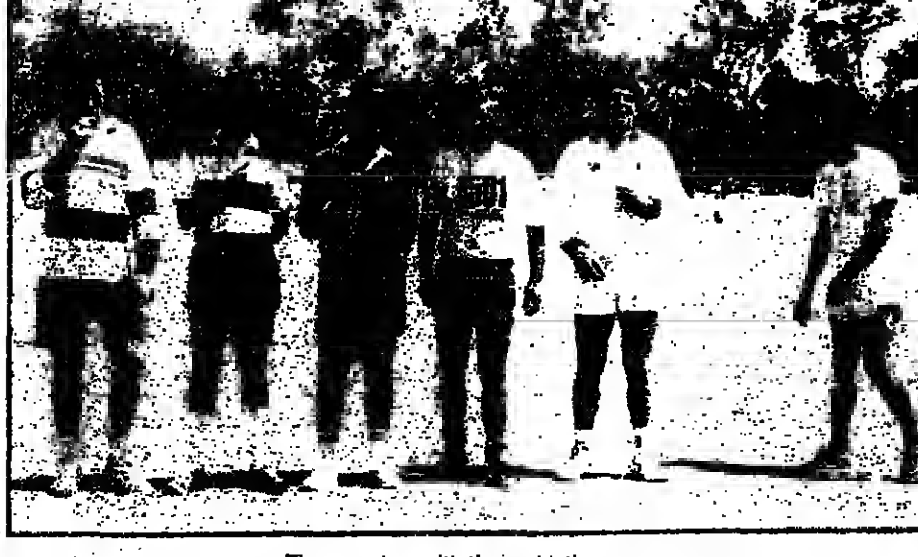
One of the juniors receives his award.



An action shot of the match.



The Juniors in action against the Dads.



The coaches with their whistles.



The invaluable tea-ladies.

SPORTS

Milan remain on top

ROME, March 25. (Reuters): AC Milan rediscovered their winning touch with a 2-1 victory at Lecce today to remain top of the Italian soccer league on the highest goalscoring day of the season.

Internazionale beat Atalanta 7-2 and Roma defeated Verona 5-2 while second-placed Napoli maintained their championship challenge with a 3-1 home win over Juventus as fans saw 35 goals in the First Division.

Milan, beaten by Juventus and Internazionale in the last two weeks, seemed to be heading for a shock third consecutive defeat when they went 1-0 down in the seventh minute as Lecce midfielder Paolo Benedetti hit home a cross from Antonio Caramante.

But Milan captain Franco Baresi marshalled his jittery defence and then went on the offensive himself.

His one-two with winger Marco Simone split the Lecce defence, leaving him unmarked to equalise with one of his rare goals in the 35th minute.

In the second half Milan, who on Wednesday qualified for the European Cup semifinals by beating Mechelen of Belgium, moved into overdrive and in the 56th minute Dutch international striker Marco van Basten hit the decisive goal.

The European champions remain one point ahead of Napoli while Inter moved into third place, four points behind.

Napoli's rejuvenated Argentine captain Diego Maradona, whose sharpness has improved in recent weeks since losing some excess weight, scored two first-half goals against Juventus.

He opened the scoring in the 13th minute when he turned on a loose ball to beat goalkeeper Stefano Tacconi and 15 minutes later curled a free-kick from five metres outside the penalty area around the defensive wall and wide of Tacconi.

Luigi de Agostini pulled one back for Juventus from the penalty spot in the 61st minute, but Napoli stopper Giovanni Francini put the result beyond doubt with a third goal three minutes later.

West German internationals were prominent among the scorers in Inter and Roma's goal spree.

Striker Juergen Klinsmann scored two and German captain Lothar Matthaus one in Inter's blitz of seventh-placed Atalanta, while Rudi Voller got two for Roma.

Bottom club Ascoli, on 19 points with four League games to play, face almost certain relegation after losing 3-1 to fellow strugglers Cremonese, now four places and four points above them.

Results		
Bologna	1	Sampdoria 0
Cremonese	2	Ascoli 0
Florentina	2	Cesena 0
Lazio	2	Verona 0
Inter	7	Atalanta 2
Lecce	1	AC Milan 2
Napoli	3	Juventus 1
Roma	5	Verona 2
Udinese	2	Bari 0

Standings		
Tabular under: played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points		
AC Milan	20	10 4 6 50 25 44
Napoli	20	17 9 4 47 29 43
Inter	20	16 8 6 49 37 40
Sampdoria	20	14 10 6 42 25 36
Juventus	20	13 12 5 47 32 38
Roma	20	13 10 7 41 37 36
Atalanta	20	11 10 9 32 27 32
Bologna	20	9 14 7 25 26 32
Bari	20	5 18 7 33 30 28
Lazio	20	7 13 10 31 32 27
Cesena	20	5 15 10 24 24 25
Lecce	20	5 13 12 34 38 23
Florentina	20	5 13 12 34 38 23
Cremonese	20	5 13 12 34 38 23
Cesena	20	5 13 12 34 38 23
Udinese	20	5 13 12 34 38 23
Verona	20	5 13 12 34 38 23
Ascoli	20	3 13 14 19 26 19

Alexandra Yashin, mother of legendary Soviet goalkeeper Lev Yashin, cries over her dead son on Saturday evening during a ceremony at the Dinamo Stadium, Moscow. Yashin died on March 20. (Reuters wirephoto)

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Sampdoria

Juventus

Roma

Atalanta

Bologna

Bari

Lazio

Cesena

Lecce

Florentina

Cremonese

Cesena

Udinese

Verona

Ascoli

Results

Standings

Tabular under: played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points

AC Milan

Napoli

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Sampdoria

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